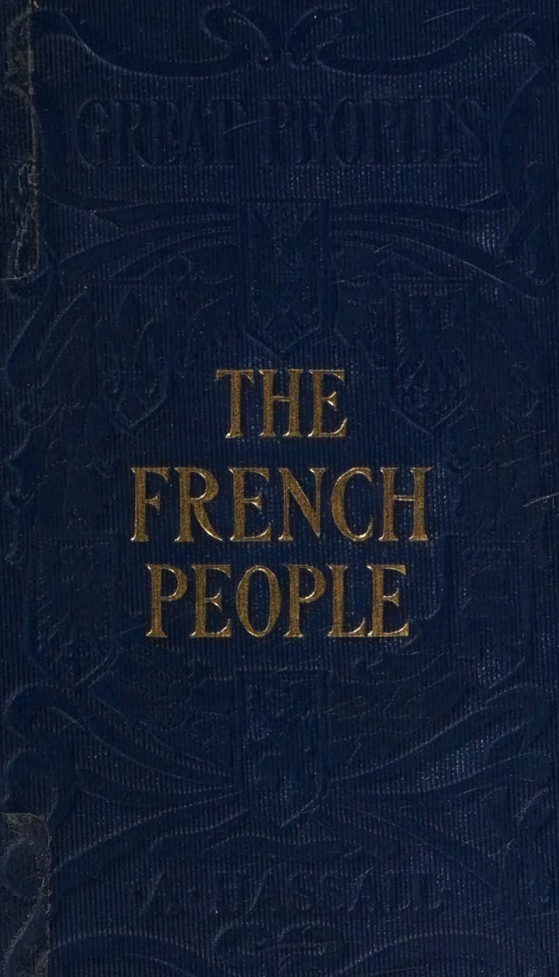

GREAT PEOPLES

THE FRENCH PEOPLE

A. HASSALL

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THE FRENCH PEOPLE

THE FRENCH PEOPLE

BY

ARTHUR HASSALL, M.A.

STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD
AUTHOR OF THE BALANCE OF POWER, ETC.

WITH INDEX

NEW YORK
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
1901

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THE FRENCH PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

France is a country which from Roman times has influenced the ideas of Christendom. Abounding in natural wealth, her compactness and central position have given her many advantages over the rest of Europe. Recovering rapidly from the onslaughts of the Northmen, she led the crusades, and, having checked the feudal instincts of her baronage, became under Philip Augustus and Louis IX the first centralized national monarchy in Europe. In spite of her temporary effacement during the horrors of the Hundred Years' War she soon regained her lost position, and under Louis XI was built up a great absolute monarchy for other nations to imitate. In 1494 her invasion of Italy inaugurated modern times, and France led the way in endeavouring to reconcile the movements of the Renaissance and the Reformation. Though she failed to establish her supremacy in Italy, and though for some forty years was the prey to religious and civil war, she suddenly under Louis XIII and XIV shook off her internal troubles, and, having suppressed the nobles, the Huguenots, and the Frondeurs, dominated Europe politically and intellectually for nearly a century. Her failure in the eighteenth century to compete with the colonial expansion of England relegated her for a time to a secondary position among the great nations. This retirement was, however, only momentary, for the French revolutionary wars found her with vigour unimpaired and the enthusiasm of her sons for noble ideals unabated.

The victories of Napoleon, in spite of his eventual defeat and captivity, left France in possession of a Napoleonic legend which is by no means a mere memory. And, though republican experiments have been and are still being tried, France remains " the centre of life, heart of Europe, France of Charlemagne, St. Louis, Napoleon," with Napoleonic and revolutionary legends struggling for mastery.

Her Geographical Position.—Her eastern frontier is partly arbitrary, partly natural. From Dunkirk a line drawn through the Ardennes forests along the Belgian and Luxemburg frontiers to a point on the Vosges mountains nearly opposite Strasbourg would fairly and accurately represent her northeastern boundary.

Thence the line runs along the heights of the Vosges southward so as to include the pass of Belfort, and from Belfort it passes along the line of the Jura skirting Geneva and to the summit of Mont Blanc.

It then follows the Alps till it deflects to the east so as to include all that was Savoy before 1859. Turning suddenly westward to the Pass of Mont Cenis it takes a southern direction along the Alps, skirts Dauphiné, and reaches the Mediterranean about three miles east of Mentone. This boundary has suffered many changes during French history, and under the Directory and Napoleon

France could boast that the Rhine itself was the eastern and northeastern limit of her territories.

Four great rivers are to be found in France. Of these, the Rhone flows from north to south between the Alps and the Cévennes, and passes Lyons, Vienne, Orange, Avignon, and Arles before it falls into the Mediterranean. Above Lyons the population is mainly Gallic; below it are to be found Ligurians with traces of Greek and Roman blood.

The Garonne, which flows from east to west, drains Guienne and Gascony, and passes by Bordeaux into the Bay of Biscay. South of this river, in the southwestern corner of France, are still to be found the Basques, an Iberian race who are a dark people, untouched by foreign civilization and attached to seafaring pursuits.

North of the Garonne the Gallic race is to be found, and it is especially pure between the Garonne and the Loire and between the Loire and Normandy. The Loire itself, like the Garonne, flows from the east of France to the western sea, passing by Nevers, Orléans, Blois, Tours, and Nantes. Near it the Angevin kings of England spent much of their time, and the whole region is one of the most interesting, historically speaking, in France.

From the Vosges, past Troyes, Paris, and Rouen, flows the Seine, which empties itself at Havre into the English Channel. In Normandy, as in the northeast and east, an infusion of Teutonic blood is to be found, which is largely modified elsewhere by a mixture of Celtic blood.

Bounded on the southeast and east by the Alps, the Jura, and the Vosges, with the Cévennes stretching from the Rhone to near Lyons, if we accept the long series of heights extending from the Pyrenees to Mont St. Gothard, and excluding the mass of the Cévennes and the lower hills of the Lyonnais Charolais and Côte d'Or, France is mainly composed of a great plain divided into three parts by the Seine, the Loire, and the Garonne, and peopled to a very large extent by Celts.

With a temperate climate and a clever and industrious people, France has been by nature enabled to play an important part in the world's history. Certain characteristics in her development and in her government force themselves upon the notice of all students of her past.

Her Wars.—The influential position always enjoyed by France was due in great measure to the frequent wars waged by her, either for conquest or defence.

Her sons took a leading part in resistance to Islam and in the crusades, and spread all over Europe and the East the fame of the French arms and the knowledge of the French tongue. Her Italian wars, together with the long struggle with the Hapsburgs, which was waged by Francis I and Henry II in the sixteenth, by Richelieu and Louis XIV in the seventeenth, by Louis XV, the Committee of Public Safety, and the Directory in the eighteenth, and by Napoleon in the present century, spread the influence of French ideas far and wide.

These wars, waged either in defence of France or for conquest, were often caused by circumstances connected with the geographical position of France or by the warlike tendencies of the races which inhabited the country.

Leading Characteristics of the French Nation.—The history of France presents in its course many features peculiar to itself and which differentiate it from that of other European countries.

The steady growth of the absolute monarchy, due to the love of the majority of Frenchmen for a strong government, to the financial maladministration extending over centuries, and to the gradual concentration in Paris of all the threads of government, can be traced clearly from the accession of the Capetian dynasty. The very checks to the increased influence of Paris and to the formation of a centralized monarchical system, as exemplified by the difference between the people living north and south of the Loire and by such institutions as the *Parlement* of Paris, impeded for a time, but could not stay, the regular development on the lines already described. In fact, such centrifugal tendencies as exemplified by the Albigensian war, the adhesion of Bordeaux and the surrounding district to England for some centuries, the Huguenot attempts to gain an independent position, the rising in the Cévennes at the beginning and the Girondist movement at the end of the eighteenth century do but intensify the interest which attaches to the study of the history of a Latin nation possessed of many diversities of language, traditions, and aims. The Gaul of Julius Cæsar, the West Frankish dominions of Charles the Great, the France of Hugh Capet, of St. Louis, and of Louis XIV, in spite of the irruption and settlement of alien peoples, have in the main identical characteristics.

Love of a Monarchy.—Of the above characteristics the most noticeable is the love of a strong government. The monarchy was always popular in France, while representative institutions never flourished. The monarchy was associated with triumphs abroad and with territorial unity at home. Philip Augustus, St. Louis, Philip IV, Charles V, Louis XI, Henry IV, Louis XIV—all were supported by the mass of the French nation.

In spite of periods of weakness the French monarchy always asserted itself successfully against its foes; it became absolute and despotic in the seventeenth century, and was not overthrown till 1792.

Since the Revolution the French have professedly substituted the passion for equality for their veneration of a monarchical form of government. Napoleon's career was, however, popular, and a successful soldier who would satisfy the national love of equality and the universal appreciation of glory might hope again to control the destinies of France.

Financial Maladministration.—What overthrew the monarchy and has throughout the whole of her history weakened France was financial maladministration. An enormously rich country, France has suffered in a most extraordinary way from bad financial management.

As early as the days of Philip IV the evil of financial maladministration had appeared, and in spite of the efforts of reformers like Jacques Cœur, Sully, and Colbert was never removed. This serious drawback to real improvement in the condition of France was not due entirely to the despotic action of the Crown. The States-General of 1356 and 1357 committed grave financial blunders, and found themselves compelled to re-establish the *gabelle*—as the unpopular tax on salt was called. Charles V, the greatest of the French kings before Louis XI, carried out many valuable reforms, but his financial measures are open to criticism. He compelled every family to buy a certain amount of salt, and, what was worse, he frequently sold or granted exemptions from taxation to districts, corporations, and even to a class. His taxes were thus unequal and arbitrary, and he began the system of imposing customs on the transit of trade from one province to another.

Undoubtedly his military and civil expenses, owing to the war with England, were high, and a similar condition of things prevailed under Louis XI, while Louis XII's empty treasury was in great part due to the Italian wars of his predecessor, Charles VIII. At any rate, it was Louis XII who raised the sale of offices into a regular system, thus surrendering the hold of the Crown on its own officials. Henry IV still further systematized this disastrous custom, and by instituting the *paulette* enabled the *Parlement* of Paris to grow into a powerful hereditary corporation, which henceforward showed its independence by becoming in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries one of the most serious opponents of royalty.

Richelieu had the power, but, unfortunately, had not the desire to carry out financial reforms. He openly proclaimed his ignorance and indifference to finance, interfering with it as little as he could. Had Richelieu given France an efficient financial system his country would have been far better able to cope with England in America and India during the eighteenth century. As it was, he never attempted to grapple with the unfair system of taxation, and his successor, Mazarin, also failed to carry out any improvements. Colbert, indeed, made a partially successful series of efforts to cleanse the Augean stable, but Louis XIV's wars and domestic expenditure, and the exemptions enjoyed by the upper classes, reduced France soon after his great minister's death to a condition of semi-bankruptcy. In fact, it is hardly too much to say that if it had not been for the existence of a vast system of privilege, which rendered financial reforms impossible, the Revolution would never have taken place. During the eighteenth century things worsened steadily. In spite of the efforts of such men as the brothers Paris and Turgot, the financial maladministration continued, and was one of the principal causes of the outbreak of the French Revolution.

That such a subtle evil should have been allowed to grow till it overthrew the monarchy was due in great measure to the lack of able financial administrators. It was also partly caused by the failure of the French to establish a check upon the executive, such as England has, in a system of parliamentary government.

One of the most remarkable features in French history is the way in which the States-General never succeeded in establishing itself as a regular and recognised means of expressing the wishes of the mass of the people. The cleavage between classes and the isolated position of the provinces were the causes of this phenomenon, so difficult of explanation to the Teutonic mind. France, unlike England, never experienced the blessing of a Norman conquest to give her unity and homogeneity.

Growth of Paris.—And as the provinces, which were of diverse origin and interests, remained isolated and estranged from each other Paris increased steadily in importance till she gained her present position and dominated France.

This supremacy of Paris was finally and completely effected by the Revolution of 1789, which, in order to destroy all remains of provincial independence and to make France a really compact power, substituted eighty-three departments for the thirty-two provinces. Thus a united France was created, and being attached by a coalition the French were enabled to occupy the boundaries of ancient Gaul.

Territorial Expansion.—Through the greater part of French history, certainly since the days of Francis I, the object of the great rulers of France was to extend the French borders to the Scheldt, the Rhine, and the Alps. Henry IV, Richelieu, Louis XIV, and Louis XV—all endeavoured, not entirely without success, to advance the French boundaries. Even to this day, in spite of the loss of Alsace and Lorraine, Frenchmen look forward to the time when the Scheldt and the Rhine shall be the border lines of France on the northeast and east frontiers.

Failure to Found Colonies.—The endeavours of France to found a colonial system have not proved very encouraging. Successful colonial expansion and the power of forming self-supporting settlements across the seas seem to be denied to her. Yet France had apparently admirable opportunities of anticipating England in the foundation of colonies and the conquest of dependencies in various parts of the world. But France was hampered, partly by the rooted aversion of her people to emigration, partly by the methods used and the policy adopted towards her colonists, and was forced to see herself supplanted in North America and in India by the less-organized but more enterprising Anglo-Saxons.

The Position of France.—Her central position, which enables her to exercise a controlling influence upon Spain and Italy, and which adapts her for wars of aggression, gives France at once a powerful influence in Europe, while her contact with the Mediterranean and her African possessions now brings her into connection with the far East. With her western shores washed by the Atlantic, her American interests are naturally very extensive, and though Louis XIV's extensive colonial schemes in Canada failed, France brought to the Americans in the war against England invaluable assistance.

France is thus fitted by her position, by the character of her people, and by her history to excel in the arts of civilization no less than in war, both by sea and land. Her peasants, diligent, industrious, and conservative by nature, are always guided by the militant instincts of the upper classes and influenced by the existence of a powerful army. Both in the domain of thought and also by her arms France has in the past swayed Europe; it is by no means improbable that she will long continue to be one of the great centres of European political and social life.

CHAPTER I

THE ARRIVAL OF THE FRANKS

FROM the year 121 B. C., the beginning of the Roman conquest, to the year 843 A. D., the date of the break-up of Charles the Great's empire by the Treaty of Verdun, is comprised the first period in the history of France.

During that period the country which we call France was occupied by Iberians, Gauls, Romans, and Teutons, and the French nation was gradually formed from a mixture of these three elements. The Gauls, who belonged to the Celtic portion of the Aryan race, at the time of the Roman conquest, between 121 and 49 B. C., were divided into eighty or ninety independent tribes. Under the Romans Gaul included not only modern France, but also Switzerland, Alsace, and Belgium—in other words, the lands between the Alps, the Rhine, the Pyrenees, and the ocean. In later French history Louis XIV attempted to extend France to these ancient boundaries of Gaul, while the French Revolutionary armies in 1794 and following years successfully carried out the aim of the Grand Monarque, but Napoleon, fortunately for Europe, failed to grasp the opportunity presented to him, as late as 1814, for establishing the Rhine as the French boundary on the east.

At the period of the Roman conquest the north of Gaul was not far advanced in civilization, while the south, where the Gauls traded with the Greeks, was more developed, and was accustomed to letters and to coined money. Massilia, or Marseilles, was practically a Greek city whose influence extended from Nice to Montpellier and far up the Rhone Valley. But the Gauls were under the influence of the Druids; they had no organized military system, they had no political unity, and, like the Anglo-Saxons before the reign of Athelstan, they had no real city life. In Aquitania, in the southwest, lived the Iberians who inhabited Gaul before the Gauls, and whose descendants, the Basques, so celebrated as hardy sailors, still reside under the shadow of the Pyrenees and speak a strange language; to the east the Ligurians, whose tongue is extinct, dwelt on the Mediterranean Riviera; while on the centre and northeast the German tribes were ever threatening to overrun Gaul.

Till the fall of the Roman Empire Julius Cæsar and his Roman successors kept these fierce Teutons at bay, but after 476 A. D. they occupied Gaul and eventually gave it the name of France.

Between 121 and 58 B. C. Rome contented herself with occupying Gallia Narbonensis—i. e., all southeastern Gaul which was not influenced by Marseilles—and Narbonne became its capital. It gradually was extended so as to include all the land between the Rhone, the Cévennes, and the Pyrenees. This district has always remained distinct from the rest of France, and its sons developed qualities not found among the stolid inhabitants of Normandy or the keener dwellers in Brittany. Julius Cæsar, however, conquered the whole of Gaul between 58 and

51 B. C., the fall of Alesia and the capture of Vercingetorix in 52 B. C. deciding the fate of the country. "Henceforward," writes Mr. Warde Fowler, "that splendid country with its gifted population was to exercise an ever-increasing influence on European history; an influence on the whole for good, and one which, in some ways at least, has surpassed that of every other European race." * Finally in 49 B. C. Julius Cæsar annexed the Massiliot land to Gallia Narbonensis. All Gaul was now subject to Rome.

Between 27 B. C. and 250 A. D. Gaul was organized and Romanized, principally through the efforts of Augustus. Narbonensis, in the south, had its own municipal system based on the Roman model, while the rest of France was divided into three provinces—Belgica in the north, Lugdunensis in the centre, and Aquitania in the southwest, and the sixty-four tribes who inhabited the country were given what practically amounted to home rule under the great landowners.

Lugdunum, or Lyons, was the capital of these tribes, a great commercial city, and the meeting-place of a council of representatives of each tribe, which met each August to maintain the state worship—the centre of the Roman administration. An armed force was stationed along the eastern frontier, which preserved Gaul from fear of invasion and overawed the warlike Teutonic tribes.

Under this *régime* Gaul enjoyed peace for some three centuries, and by the end of that period the Romanization of the country was completed and the provincials had become free Roman citizens. But from about the year

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* Julius Cæsar, by W. Warde Fowler, p. 23 f.

250 A. D. a long period of storm and stress succeeded the years of prosperous though uneventful peace.

From the year 250 A. D. Gaul suffered from constant invasions of the Teutons. The Roman Empire was steadily decaying, its population was declining, and its power of resistance was lessening. Of the invading German hordes the Alamanni and the Franks proved the most dangerous, and the east of Gaul especially suffered from their ravages.

From the reign and policy of Diocletian (284–305) Gaul experienced a certain amount of relief. He divided the empire into four parts, placing a ruler over each; and Spain, Gaul, and Britain, first under Maximian, and then under Constantius Clorus, Julian, and Valentinian I, were able for a time to hold their own against their foes.

At last in 330 Constantine the Great set up Constantinople as a new capital of the empire, which after the death of Theodosius, in 395, split into the Western and the Eastern Empires. While the Eastern Empire survived till the capture of Constantinople, in 1453, the Western Empire perished, and for a time anarchy supervened.

With the end of the period of anarchy a new epoch in the history of Gaul was opened, and the kingdoms of the Visigoths, Burgundians, and Franks took the place in Gaul of the rule of the Roman Empire. The Visigothic kingdom about the year 500 extended from the Loire and Rhone to the south of Spain, and thus included all southwestern Gaul, while the Burgundians, fixing their capital at Lugdunum (Lyons), held most of southeastern Gaul.

The Franks, who arrived last, came, like the Danes into England in the ninth century, in tribes and settled in northern Gaul.

Of the two great portions into which the Frankish nation was divided about the middle of the fifth century, the Ripuarians established themselves about Cologne, while the Salian Franks advanced beyond the Scheldt and the Meuse.

These Salian Franks had developed into a nation with a legal system, the Salic law, and with a well-recognised royal power in the hands of the Merovingian family. Round Cambrai and Tournai (Cameracum and Tornacum) were their most important settlements, but in the latter half of the sixth century events occurred which had a very important bearing on the future of their race.

The Roman Empire still existed, and in 451 Aëtius, "the last of the Romans," with Roman troops overthrew Attila the Hun at Chalons in what has been called one of the decisive battles of the world. In 476 the last Emperor of Rome, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed, and in 486 Syagrius, a Gallo-Roman noble who attempted to hold his own against the Teutons, was overthrown near Soissons by Clovis, who in 481 had become king of the Salian Franks.

The accession of Clovis marks the beginning of the supremacy of the Franks in the west, while the battle of Soissons decided the fate of northern Gaul. The next ten years were occupied by the Franks in strengthening their hold on all Gaul north of the Loire and in preparing for further conquests.

During these years Clovis conquered the Alamanni beyond the Rhine and became a Christian. From 446 to 510 he made Burgundy a tributary state, and, what was even more important in the history of France, he overthrew the Visigoths at the battle of Vouglé in 507, overran the country to the Garonne, and, though he was defeated near Arles, he continued to hold all Aquitaine between the Garonne and the Loire. It was not till the fifteenth century that this troublesome region was finally united to the French monarchy. Before he died he made himself the only Frankish king by compassing the death of Sigebert, the ruler of the Ripuarian Franks, and then by killing his son and annexing all the territory occupied by the Ripuarians beyond the Rhine. With the murder of all rivals among the Salian Franks he had by the time of his death removed his enemies from his path. Though Gregory of Tours might declare that "thus did God daily deliver the enemies of Clovis into his hand because he walked before his face with an upright heart," it remains apparent that Christianity had little effect upon the life of this savage Frank.

It is, however, none the less true that Clovis was one of the founders of modern France, though important limitations to his so-called conquest of Gaul must be observed.

Under him the Franks settled to a certain extent in northern Gaul, and Paris, Soissons, Orléans, and Metz became the seats of Frankish kingdoms.

But Brittany was never really conquered, and in Burgundy and Aquitaine the Franks hardly settled at all. Even after the expulsion of the Visigoths south of the Pyrenees and the conquest of Burgundy, Frankish populations never settled south of the Loire, and Aquitaine always tended when the kingly power was weak to recover its independence.

For many centuries Aquitaine and France north of the Loire had little in common, and in race and language there are still salient points of difference to be found among the inhabitants of northern and southern France.

The Merovingians from Clovis onward overran, indeed, southern Gaul, but their actual kingdom consisted of central Germany and northern Gaul. The Loire was practically the limit of their dominion in Gaul.

The whole character of their settlement is in many ways remarkable. Unlike the conquests of the Jutes, Angles, and Saxons in Britain, which meant a clean sweep with all traditions, as well as the disappearance of the Roman language, Roman town life, and the Christian religion, the coming of the Teutons into Gaul implied no break with the old civilization. Their arrival and settlement resembled in many ways the later invasions of the Danes into England, or the Norman conquest. At first as subjects, then as allies, lastly as conquerors, the Teutonic displacement of the Roman rule was a gradual process. Influenced and impressed by Roman civilization, which survived their arrival, the Teutons showed no disposition to destroy. The Latin tongue as spoken by the common people "was adopted by the Frank, developed into the dialects of medieval France, and, through them, is the parent of modern French." Like the language, so the towns survived, and the great towns of medieval and modern France can date their foundation to Roman times, or, like Marseilles, to a still earlier civilization.

But under the stress of the barbarian invasions the towns were unable to stand alone as semi-independent, self-governing units. For safety and support they were driven to seek the protection of the great landowners, whose estates suffered comparatively little from the Teutonic supremacy, and on which the labour system which existed under the Roman rule survived. This highly civilized country, with its flourishing towns and its developed land system, had by the time of Constantine become Christian. Contact with Roman Christians had resulted in many of the invaders, especially the Visigoths, embracing the Christian religion before they entered Gaul.

At any rate, before the death of Clovis practically all of the newcomers were Christian. France can therefore claim a distinct continuity with the Roman Empire, the highly developed civilization of which formed part of, and immensely influenced the new order of things.

During this distracted time, however, when the barbarians were forcing their way into the empire, lawless violence seemed likely to prevail. It was thought by some that with the fifth century the end of the world was at hand, while the bishops saw in Clovis the "divinely appointed scourge of heresy and wickedness." His conversion preserved for northern France the services of the Church—the only institution of the Roman Empire which survived north of the Loire.

CHAPTER II

THE ALLIANCE WITH THE CHURCH

THE conversion of Clovis to the orthodox faith after his victory over the Alamanni in 496 is an event of enormous significance. He alone of the Teutonic kings adopted the faith of his Roman subjects, and consequently received from them, and especially from the clergy, that support which no Vandal or Goth or Burgundian could hope for. The adhesion of Clovis to Christianity was one of the principal causes of his victories and of the permanence of his kingdom. "When you go to battle," wrote Avitus, Bishop of Vienne, to the king, "we shall conquer"; and strengthened by his alliance with the Bishops of Arles and Langres he defeated the Burgundians. The Bishops of Rodez and Tours summoned him against the Visigoths, while the Bishop of Toulouse gave him every assistance, and the Bishop of Béarn not only stirred up a rising against the Visigoths, but died with arms in his hands.

The Armorican states submitted in 497, the Burgundians in 501, and the Visigoths after a fierce combat at Vouglé in 507 were broken and dispersed.

As head of the Catholics in Gaul, Clovis became in 510 the sole sovereign of the Franks, and, though his conversion had not changed his cruel, treacherous nature, his alliance with the Church was continued by his successors to their own and their country's advantage.

The conversion of Clovis was a severe blow to Arianism, that form of Christianity held by most of the Teutonic tribes which had settled in the west. The bishops of Rome were strongly opposed to Arianism, and welcomed Clovis as an ally, supported all his undertakings, and about 500 was begun that connection between the popes and Franks which was to have such important effects in the later history of Europe. The Burgundians and Visigoths were Arians, and in his campaign against them, in which their culture disappeared with their Arianism, Clovis acted as the defender of the pure faith of Christianity. Gregory of Tours declares that all sorts of miraculous events, such as the appearance of a brilliant meteor on the steeple of Saint Hilary at Poitiers, pointed to Clovis as the opponent of heresy.

Thus the Franks, in accepting conversion, found strong support from the bishops and from the Pope in all their undertakings, and fell naturally under the influence of Christianity.

In the new era, when political unity had perished, religious unity remained, and the Christian Church was the most stable institution which met the eye of the invading Franks. "Populations," writes Guizot, "endlessly different in origin, habits, speech, destiny, rush upon the scene; all becomes local and partial; every enlarged idea, every general institution, every great social arrangement, is lost sight of; and in this moment the Christian Church proclaims most loudly the unity of its teaching, the universality of its law. And from the bosom of the most frightful disorder the world has ever seen has arisen the largest and purest idea, perhaps, which ever drew men together—the idea of a spiritual society."

It was this great society which, having already half converted the Roman Empire, now converted its Frankish conquerors. The bishops, always powerful in politics, became not only the *defensores* of towns, but the advisers of the Teutonic kings.

The Christian bishops of the fourth century had taken up the Roman culture of the great cities of Gaul; in the period of invasion they had acted with courage and dignity, and inspired the respect of the invaders. Theodoric and Alaric had recognised the high morality and enthusiasm which permeated Christianity; Clovis and Gondibald both listened to the teaching of the clergy. The bishops had played an important part in the victories of Clovis; they played a still more important part in the succeeding centuries.

During the wonderful transition from barbarism to civilization the Christian Church remained steadfast and active. " Elle remplira l'interrègne amené par les invasions." It carried on the administration when the civil officers had fled, and it did much to preserve order.

The Teutons therefore found on arriving in Gaul " a strange organized polity, one and united in a vast brotherhood, coextensive with the empire, but not of it, nor of its laws and institutions."

This unexpected, undreamed-of spiritual power, this great society which the Franks met on crossing the Rhine, could not be ignored. The acceptance of the orthodox faith by Clovis implied then an alliance, the effects of which he could not foresee. As it was, the

Church at once appreciated the value of this alliance with its savage ruler, and took the lead in reconstructing society, in adapting the forms and traditions of the invaders to the laws and institutions of the old system, in reconciling conflicting interests, and, in a word, in reestablishing civil order. The bishops, priests, and councils of the Christian Church not only co-operated loyally and successfully with kings, princes, and emperors in carrying through political and social changes, but also developed among the new populations ethical changes of a corresponding importance.

The Franks, unlike the Greeks and Latins, had to learn almost the first elements of civilized life, and to them Christianity came when they were victorious and triumphant. It was of the highest moment that the tribes while flushed with success should be tamed and disciplined. Fortunately the Franks did not disturb the towns, the boundaries of which formed the boundaries of Christian bishoprics. The immediate crisis in the history of France was over with the conversion of Clovis, and the progress of Christianity was enormously hastened by the large number of existing towns. In each city a congregation soon formed itself, and gradually each city became the seat of a bishop.

The bishops were thus enabled by their teaching to affect the national character of the Franks in a very remarkable degree. Before long the Frank kings found that in the bishops and clergy they had given themselves not only legislators and advisers, but schoolmasters and ministers of discipline. Thus the Irish monk Columban reproved the wicked Queen Brunhildis, and was expelled from Austrasia.

But in spite of such isolated instances of opposition, it was early apparent that Christianity alone could cope with barbarism, and that the Christian Church was alone possessed of the influence, the ideas, the doctrines, and the laws out of which society could be reconstructed. Clovis had fought and won campaigns, but it was the bishops and clergy who had in reality conquered, and they shared with the king the results of his victories. In 511 he presided at Orléans over a synod, the first held in Gaul since the coming of the Franks. Thirty-two bishops were present, anxious to repress Arianism with the aid of the secular arm. Before they separated the king and bishops ordained (1) that the right of sanctuary should be extended to the houses of bishops; (2) that the Church lands should be free from all charges; (3) that the bishops should have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the Church. Under the Carolings, ecclesiastics of every degree, if guilty of any crime, could only be arraigned before a bishop.

The alliance between the Frankish kings and the Church was thus firmly established, and the bishops and clergy bent all their energies to improving their organization, encouraging the building of monasteries, and furthering missionary enterprise—all these objects being as a rule carried out with the full co-operation of the reigning sovereigns.

From 511 to 750 no less than eighty-three councils were held, the organization of the Church was improved, and the relations of the laity to the clergy and of the clergy to the bishops were definitely settled. Not only the clergy, but often the laity, duly observed the ordinances of the Church. Charles the Great fasted, and no military operations took place during Lent. On occasions he proclaimed a general public fast, either on some important occasion or as expiation for some fault. Nothing could exceed the deference of Louis the Pious, or indeed that of Charles the Bald, to the will of the Church.

The observance of Sundays was insisted upon, and marriage was raised into the position of a Christian ceremony. In this work of reform and organization the bishops took the most prominent part.

In Merovingian times the authority of the bishop was immense; it became still more formidable under Charles the Great and his Caroling successors. Against the disobedient he could use excommunication, the poor he could awe by miracles.

While the bishops were busy organizing the Church, advising kings, and directing the course of the administration, the piety of the multitude was stimulated and increased by the growth of monasteries.

The Church had indeed become an established institution in the country, but the ignorance was so general that the secular clergy unsupported would have found it difficult to fight their battle alone.

In the monasteries, however, piety and learning secured a home, and they became strong enough to triumph over lawless violence. No institutions of that time can compare in sound usefulness with the monasteries which sprang up all over Gaul and Germany, and taught the people the elements of agriculture as well as the ordinary arts of civilization. In the monasteries was to be met with all the education and knowledge which then existed.

In 585 Columban, an Irish monk, arrived in France and before his death founded the famous monasteries of Luxeuil, and Saint Gall in Switzerland. From that time monasteries sprang up all over France, many being in the centres of population, such as Saint Cloud, Saint Denis, Saint Omer, and Saint Amand. Others, like Saint Calais, Saint Yrieux, Abbeville, Remiremont, and Maubeuge, owed their origin to the piety of some holy man. Convents for women were founded simultaneously. At Poitiers was raised the convent of Sainte Croix by Radegonde, the wife of Lothair I, while the daughter of Lothair II built the convent of Sainte Enimie. Even Brunhildis gave large benefactions to certain houses, and the shortcomings of Charles Martel in this respect called down upon him the anathemas of the Church.

It was quite evident that an alliance with the Church was necessary for the successful union of France under one head, and the Merovingian kings acted as leaders of the Church as well as rulers of the state. Though they consulted the leading men from time to time and issued regulations, and though local synods met, there was little system about the government of the Frankish Church till Boniface, Archbishop of Mainz, began his work of organization.

Under the Merovingians the Church and State were thus closely allied. The bishops exercised a moral power and a political authority. Nominated by the king, they were employed as ambassadors and on public business; they were consulted on all affairs of importance. Guntram called a council of bishops to decide upon the merits of his quarrel with Sigebert, and he also wished to judge Brunhildis by such a council.

The relations of Church and State being so inextricably connected, it was only natural that confusion should ensue; it was only too certain that the Church would suffer from its intimate connection with the state. Ecclesiastics sat side by side with laymen in councils, and with them they formed a powerful aristocracy which during the decline and fall of the Merovingians asserted itself and conquered the monarchy. From the death of Clovis, in 511, to the battle of Testry, in 687, the Austrasian or Eastern Franks, living between the Rhine and the Meuse, struggled with the Neustrian Franks, who occupied the country between the Meuse and the ocean. In the struggle between Austrasia and Neustria for predominance the lay and ecclesiastical aristocracy found a splendid opportunity for asserting their power.

The terms of the peace concluded in 584 between Chilperich and Guntram of Burgundy were arranged by the bishops and great men; again in 587 the differences between these two rivals were settled at Andelot by the same combination of laymen and ecclesiastics, and in 613 the fall of Brunhildis, with whom ended the greatness of the Merovingian house, was the result of her attempt to dominate over the aristocracy.

In 614 a constitution emanating from a council of the bishops and the great men was published, which was a sort of Magna Carta. It was a defence set up against any despotic acts on the part of a sovereign. While the nobles guarded their own interests, the Church stipulated for purity of elections and the preservation of her jurisdiction.

The Merovingian kingship was vanquished by the aristocracy, though Dagobert (628–638) made a vain attempt to control a force which was about to sweep away his house. The success achieved by the Church by its close connection with politics led to a deterioration in the manners and lives of the bishops. Powerful families held bishoprics, and in feudal wise endeavoured to extend their authority over immense areas.

Leodegar, or Saint Leger, Bishop of Autun, conducted rebellions, attempted to overthrow the vindictive and powerful Ebroin, and finally was brutally murdered by the latter. This and many other similar actions on the part of ecclesiastics showed how necessary was the establishment of a powerful ruler in France. The victory of Pepin d'Héristal of Austrasia over the Neustrians at Testry in 687 came therefore opportunely to deal the deathblow to the incapable Merovingian royalty, to check lawlessness in Church and State, and to infuse new life into the Frankish monarchy in Gaul.

With Pepin begins the supremacy of the Carolings, based upon their alliance with the Church. With him begins a new period in the history of the Franks. Clovis and the West Franks had by the aid of the Church attempted, without breaking with the past, to give to Gaul a permanent political existence. Under them Gaul remained to a great extent Roman. With Pepin, however, the Teutonic triumphed over the Roman element. He and his son Charles Martel, though only mayors of the palace and guardians of the last *rois fainéants*, who dragged on a weary existence till 751, definitely carried on the work of curbing the lay and reforming the ecclesiastical aristocracy.

In this way they prepared the ground for the reigns of Pepin le Bref and Charles the Great, the first Carolingian kings.

During the period between the battle of Testry (687) and the accession of Pepin le Bref—a period often known as that of the Mayors of the Palace—the Church was reorganized, missionary enterprise was encouraged, and the papal authority was definitely recognised.

The bishops were at first inclined to resist Charles Martel; Rigobert, Bishop of Rheims, actually closed his gates upon him. Charles at once deposed him, and, ignoring the canonical regulations, gave his see to Milo, Bishop of Treves. His decisive victory over the great Saracen invasion in 732, near Poitiers, was a triumph not only for the Franks, but also for Western Christendom. But though in one aspect a Christian warrior, Charles was not looked upon with any favour by the ecclesiastics; he showed no respect for the Church, but simply treated Gaul as a conquered country, and the bishops as laymen. Order he enforced, but he did little to restore spirituality to the Church, the condition of which remained a grave scandal. But already a movement from within had begun, destined to raise the tone of the clergy and to initiate important changes in their manner of life. The beginning of the eighth century saw a great outburst of missionary enterprise, largely due to English effort.

Willebrord, supported by Pepin d'Héristal, had already founded the bishopric of Frisia in 690, and in 723 Charles Martel extended his protection to Winfrid or Boniface, as he is usually called.

Boniface organized the Church in Germany, and took a leading part in establishing in Gaul the pontifical authority and the Roman discipline. In 664, at the synod of Whitby, the Church in England had decided to accept the Roman authority on all religious questions; in 748 the ancient Church in Gaul decided, under the influence of Boniface, to place herself under the Roman system. By doing so, the Church in Gaul, like the Church in England, became better disciplined, better organized, and more spiritual.

In 751 the last of the Merovingians was sent to a monastery, and Pepin le Bref was proclaimed the first Caroling king. The Pope Zacharias, whose position in Italy was menaced by the Lombards, sanctioned his seizure of the monarchical authority, and Boniface anointed him with the holy oil.

Pepin's elevation was due to a compact between himself and the papacy, and the revolution had thus an ecclesiastical character. It came none too soon, for Gallo-Roman France required some fresh blood, the Church required drastic reforms, and the ideas of Clovis and the effects of his conversion appeared to be worked out. The victory of the Germanic over the Roman elements of the Frankish state was thus of great import to Gaul, and proved highly beneficial to both Church and State.

Its effects were at once seen. "The Franks under Pepin and his successors seemed to have conquered Gaul a second time; it is the first invasion of the language, the military genius, and the manners of Germany." The triumph of the aristocracy over royalty was checked, a powerful government was established, and the papacy allied with the monarchy became the supreme and ultimate authority for regulating the affairs of the Church.

In 753 Pope Stephen, hard pressed by the Lombards, who now occupied most of Italy, crossed the Alps to beg Pepin at Ponthiou near Bar-le-Duc to fulfil his promise and defend the Roman see against its enemies. On January 1, 754, Pepin swore to do so, and on July 28th, at Saint Denis, the ceremony of the coronation was solemnly renewed.

Pope Stephen himself "anointed the most pious Prince Pepin King of the Franks and Patrician of the Romans with the oil of holy anointing according to the custom of the ancients, and at the same time crowned his two sons who stood next him, in happy succession, namely, Charles and Carloman, with the same honour."

This rite of anointing was, till the act of Boniface, and then of Stephen, new to the Frankish monarchy, and it may have been intended as a substitute for the religious sanction which noble and royal families, such as the Merovingians, possessed as the descendants of the gods or great benefactors of the race. The title of patrician of the Romans had of late years lapsed. It formerly implied a relation to the sovereign, similar to that held by the title of mayor of the palace towards Merovingian kings. In a shadowy form it seemed to have implied the duty of defending the city of Rome against external attacks.

Under the early Carolings the government of the State and Church went on together, and the officers of the Church were regarded as the officers of the state. But it is equally evident that under the later Merovingians the Frankish clergy were in a most corrupt and degraded condition, and that in spite of the excellent work done by the establishment of the Benedictine Order.

Pepin had already begun the work of reform. He had first restored to the Church the property which Charles Martel had taken from it; he had supported Boniface, the head of the papal party, who frequently presided over assemblies of nobles and clergy; and he had already formed a close connection with Rome.

The Pope, whom he clearly recognised as head of the whole Church, had urged him to sit in judgment on disobedient bishops, and, if they proved stubborn, to send them to Rome, where their cases would be decided upon.

It was therefore of immense importance in European history when the dangers to the papacy in Italy forced the Pope to ally with the growing Carolingian power. Momentous results followed this alliance. The popes, who could not hope for any assistance from the indifferent court at Constantinople against the Lombards, had helped to create a new royal power which would aid them against their enemies. The victories of Pepin over the Lombards were followed in 756 by the grant to the see of Rome of twenty-two cities stretching along the Adriatic coast from the mouths of the Po and close upon Ancona, and inland up to the Apennines. From this grant arose the claim of the papacy to temporal sovereignty, the establishment of its independence of the Eastern emperor, and the beginning of the States of the Church.

By the aid of the Frankish king Stephen II had become king as well as Pope, and the papacy did not lose the remaining portion of Pepin's gift till 1870. The Pope had shaken off his subjugation to the Eastern emperor and had become a sovereign prince. By taking over the exarchate—i. e., the old Byzantine possessions in central Italy—Stephen stood forth as an important secular ruler. Till the end of his life Pepin, "the Patricius of Rome," continued to work for the papal cause.

At a great meeting of nobles and bishops held in 757 decrees were passed regulating the lives and duties of the clergy and enforcing the fact of the close alliance between the Frankish monarchy and the Church. After the reduction of Aquitaine in 768, when the Gallo-Roman people opposed, as always, the government of the Franks, the churches which had been damaged were rebuilt, and confiscated church property was only allowed to be held by laymen on condition of their paying part of the income to the Church.

The whole of Charles the Great's reign was one long series of services on behalf of the Church. His conquests of the Saxons were followed by numerous conversions, his diets dealt with the reform and organization of the clergy, while his whole attitude towards the papacy implied a constant readiness to further Christianity. The religious sanction which the papacy in return gave to the position of Charles enormously strengthened his empire, and helped to secure the obedience of his widely scattered subjects.

Louis II, in a letter to the Eastern emperor in 871, states that his title of emperor was due to his consecration and unction by the Pope, which gave him a higher title than that of king. It is evident that the Christian power was embodied firmly in the Frankish monarchy, and that Charles the Great's empire had the sanction of the papacy.

The conversion of Clovis and his recognition of the value of the help of the clergy had thus, after centuries of vicissitudes, and after the fall of a dynasty, been followed by the famous alliance between France and the Church which, consolidated by Charles the Great and

Hugh Capet, was consummated by the concordats of Francis I and Napoleon.

Pepin had not only done much to aid the Church in Gaul to carry out its work, but had strengthened his own family by the alliance with Rome, an alliance which was of immense service to Charles the Great when he made France, or more accurately the country of the West Franks, a part of his vast empire.

CHAPTER III

CHARLES THE GREAT AND HIS LAWS

WITH the death of Pepin and the union by Charles the Great, on the death of his brother Carloman, of all the dominions of the Franks, the modern French kingdom became a part of a great Frankish empire, which stretched from the Main to the Bay of Biscay, and from the mouth of the Rhine to the mouth of the Rhone. Charles furthered the missionary enterprises in Germany undertaken by his father, and he continued and developed his alliance with the Pope and his relations with the Church. In 774, having conquered the Lombards and renewed the donation of Pepin, he took the title King of the Franks and Lombards, and was given by the Pope that of Roman Patrician. He made no attempt to amalgamate his lands on both sides of the Alps, and effected little change in the administration of Italy, which he ruled as King of the Lombards. Between 774 and 785 he overran Saxony some five times, he invaded Spain, he annexed Bavaria. During the rest of his reign he conquered the Baltic Slavs, he reduced Bohemia and the distant and barbarous Avars to subjection, he conquered the Spanish march. The imagination of Europe was powerfully impressed by his exploits and by the magnitude of his empire. His dominions extended from the shores of the Baltic to the Ebro, from the German Ocean to the Adriatic and to the Garigliano in central Italy, from the Atlantic to the lower Danube, the Theiss, and the mountains of Moravia.

In 800 he restored Leo III, who had been compelled to fly to Paderborn and seek Charles's protection, and on Christmas day Charles was crowned by the Pope in Saint Peter's basilica as emperor. With his coronation a new political theory is introduced into Western Christendom, the theory of the Holy Roman Empire.

The Frankish kingship had thus been swallowed up for the time being in a new empire, which represented the conscious and intimate union of Church and State for their mutual advantage.

The emperor, according to the new theory, was to protect the Church; in the later middle ages the popes reversed this intention and succeeded in mastering the state. But in 800, when Leo was seen on his knees "adoring" the emperor, men could not foresee Henry IV standing in the snow at Canossa.

With Charles's coronation the reign of "pure barbaric force" ends, and for some centuries the strife of ideas competes for pre-eminence with the clash of arms. Europe is henceforward dominated by the conception of a world ruled by the emperor and the Pope, the sun and the moon, controlling the lesser kings, who resemble the constellations in the heavens.

The reign of Charles the Great thus gave Europe the conception of Christendom as a great empire on the one hand and a great Church on the other; it also left its mark in the history of French institutions.

The administration of his immense dominion was naturally a difficult problem. Like Henry II of England, Charles seems to have favoured the idea of an empire divided into a number of vassal kingdoms, and he nominated his sons Charles, Louis, and Pepin to be kings respectively of Neustria, Italy, and Aquitaine.

It was of the first importance to check the growth of large semi-independent provinces, which threatened the unity of the empire. All existing duchies were therefore abolished, and what dukes remained had merely high military posts. But with regard to the frontiers Charles pursued a policy similar to that of William the Conqueror. Margraves, like the counts palatine, were given districts larger in extent than a single county, with exceptional powers, and such margraves are found guarding the marches on the frontier of Brittany, Spain, Istria, Pannonia, and Moravia.

But, as in Merovingian days, the count was still regarded as the pivot of the royal administration. As a rule the office of count was held by some member of a powerful family resident in the county over which he was placed, and whose headquarters were in one of the old Roman cities. For bad conduct counts were deprived, but cases of deprivation were few in number, as Charles was ever much opposed to strong measures without very sufficient cause. Sometimes, though rarely, as in the case of the margraviate of Toulouse, the son inherited from his father the government of several counties.

These counts thus governed large districts, like English counties, and Charles often gave countships to Saxons, Aquitanians, and Lombards, as well as to Franks, whom he could trust. Under the counts came the *centenarii*, who at first controlled a district similar to the English hundred, and later as representatives of the counts (*vicarii*) ruled a wider area. Like the counts, the *centenarii* were usually men of local influence, who in Charles's time did not succeed in making their posts hereditary.

The duties of the counts and their officers are clearly laid down in one of the capitularies. They are to aid the king and defend the people, and are not to be tempted from the right road by any gift, by fear or hatred or friendship. Such high-principled men were hard to obtain in those days, and Alcuin records the fact that *non tantos habet justitiæ adjutores quantos etiam subversores.*

To supplement his own powers of supervision Charles called to his assistance the bishops, the *missi dominici*, and the *scabini.*

Of these the bishops did a most valuable work. The Church, in spite of much corruption, was made by Charles into a centralized, organized body, and he found it a most useful means of consolidating his empire. The Church had her own code, applicable to all men; she had a sense of unity, she had traditions, and was willing to defend whatever civil rights remained.

Throughout Gaul the interests of the clergy were the same. The clergy were the best educated of Charles's subjects, and though, by reason of their learning, wealth, and position, they rapidly became part of the new aristocracy, they never ceased to watch over and defend the interests of the poor and of the old inhabitants of Gaul. In Charles they found a valuable friend and defender, and he in return, like William the Conqueror, made them independent of the secular counts, and gave them a wide jurisdiction in civil causes. With his administrative system the bishops were as closely connected as they were with that of the Merovingian sovereigns. Under Charles the state had more of a Christian character than it ever had before.

In 779 and 789 he issued capitularies restoring and reorganizing the ecclesiastical system, and throughout his reign counts and bishops work together as the ealdormen and bishops worked in the Anglo-Saxon county court.

But the harmony that prevailed for the most part in England under the great West Saxon kings was wanting in the empire of Charles the Great. Though he issued an order forbidding the great men to disobey the bishops in matters pertaining to religion, it was found practically very difficult to settle the relations of Church and State on a satisfactory basis. Louis the Debonair, or Pious, did not facilitate a happy solution of what seems still an insoluble problem, by ordering the bishops to report to him how the counts administered justice, and the counts to inform him how the bishops fulfilled their religious duties. Having their own jurisdiction the bishops administered the Roman law, and the counts administered the Frankish law as well as they could. While the bishop represented the imperial character of his master, the count represented Charles as a Frankish king.

Thus every important town had its count and bishop, the one representing the Frankish, the other the Roman element.

Though Charles naturally used the Church as a counterpoise to the turbulence of the great men, it is doubtful if this practice was beneficial to France; indeed, this part of his policy has been called "his greatest political error." Supported by the royal power, the Church after Charles's death became secularized, and a part of the feudal society which overthrew the Carolingians.

In Saxony, where the circumstances were peculiar and exceptional, the bishops were given political functions. In other parts of the empire rarely if ever was a bishop intrusted with the duties and powers of a count. In any case the policy of Charles in drawing closer the connection of the Church and the State is open to criticism.

If we except the suppression of the duchies, Charles had thus merely continued, developed, and adopted the system which had been in force when he succeeded his father, Pepin.

The importance, however, which he gave to the institution of *missi dominici* was worthy a brain more creative than that of the great emperor. The Merovingians had used *missi*, and Charles Martel and Pepin had to some extent revived the institution. But it was left to Charles to make the *missi* one of the most valuable and characteristic features of his administrative system.

Over this system of local government Charles indeed personally presided, and by frequent progresses endeavoured to keep in touch with the various portions of his empire. But it was by means of these *missi dominici* alone that he could hope to keep a check on injustice and to uphold his authority throughout his widespread dominions.

The *missi dominici*, or imperial commissioners, or royal legates, were always travelling round the realm, like staff officers, bearing Charles's orders to distant regions, and reporting to him upon the needs of the different provinces. These officials, used spasmodically by Pepin le Bref and Charles Martel, were chosen from clerics as well as from laymen. Over a certain number of countships one was placed, and the work of the local governors was regularly inspected. Often a cleric and a layman went forth together, visiting their districts four times a year, and holding courts, which all the neighbour counts had to attend.

One of the principal difficulties with which the king and his *missi* had to deal was the growing feudalization of society. Already in later Merovingian times the growth of an all-powerful aristocracy had overthrown a dynasty; after Charles the Great's death the decentralizing movement grew till it reduced France in the eleventh century to a mere geographical expression; even during his reign feudalism was gradually but surely spreading its roots deep. The Frankish chieftains settled in the country paid little heed to the emperor, and desired to be independent and unmolested. The emperor wished to bring them under his direct supervision, but his success was only transient. Feudalism was in the air, and in a capitulary of Charles issued in 813 it is ordained that "no man shall be allowed to renounce his dependence on a feudal superior after he has received any benefit from him" except in specified cases. This is only one of many allusions to the growth of a feudalizing tendency which it was part of the business of the *missi dominici* to correct.

But the *missi* had not only to correct oppressive and unjust judges, to hunt down robbers, to report upon the conduct of bishops, to check the high-handed actions of the great men: they sometimes commanded armies and were sent on embassies. This institution of the *missi dominici* was an admirable bit of machinery for keeping the empire of the Franks together.

But its success depended entirely on the strength and capacity of the emperor and on the honesty and ability of the *missi*. Suitable men were always difficult to find, for the work demanded tact, independence, and probity—qualities hard to meet with in those days.

"Take care," the *missi* are made to say to a count, in one of Charles's capitularies, "that neither you nor any of your officers are so evil disposed as to say 'Hush, hush! Say nothing about the matter till those *missi* have passed by, and afterward we will settle it quietly among ourselves.' Do not so deny or even postpone the administration of justice; but rather give diligence that justice may be done in the case before we arrive."

The *missi* could not remove a count, but they could settle in the house of an unjust or insubordinate one and watch his actions till he might repent and do justice.

To watch over and protect the poor, to shield them from injustice and oppression by all means in their power, was one of their principal duties.

There was always a danger that the *missus*, like the sheriff in the time of Henry II of England, would himself become oppressive, and after Charles's death no power was strong enough to keep the institution in working order, and with the fall of the Carolingians the *missi* disappeared.

Another check upon the counts and the *centenarii* were the *scabini*. These men at times acted like our justices of the peace, at times like modern jurors, at times like the grand jury. Appointed by the *missi*, they sat as assessors to the count or *centenarius* in their courts of justice, and at a trial decided upon the prisoner's guilt.

They were present at the meetings of the nation as well as at those of the district. Chosen for life from men of good character, they resembled the *legales homines* of Norman and Angevin times, and were no doubt useful as a check on the encroachments of the counts and on the power of the aristocracy. Seven was the regular number (though at times it was raised to twelve) that were present at a trial, and their decision was final. "After the *scabini* have condemned a man as a robber, it is not lawful for either the *comes* or the *vicarius* to grant him life."

This institution, which had much political usefulness, only remained an active force during the reign of the great emperor, and at his death was buried under the lavalike stream of feudalism.

Over the whole system stood the emperor and his assemblies. These met twice a year, in June, July, or August, and in the autumn. To the earlier meeting came all the great men, lay and clerical, to express approval; to the later meeting only the higher personages and the royal councillors, who prepared the proposals to be laid before the larger meeting. But these assemblies had little real power. The nation was not represented; the whole initiative lay with the emperor, who at the head of a race of warriors was able to weld together his vast empire.

Still the emperor consulted the members of the assemblies in drawing up his capitularies, which were simply a multifarious collection of conclusions arrived at after discussion and then issued throughout the empire. They were in no sense codes of law, for Charles was not a codifier of laws, like Justinian or Napoleon, but were simply decrees of a most varied description which throw an immense light on the social questions of the age and the real condition of mankind at the time.

The result of Charles's labours was satisfactory as long as he lived. Not for centuries was France to see again a king who could hold his own against the anarchic strength of feudalism. It was not till the reign of Philip Augustus that the great vassals were again compelled to acknowledge and obey the royal power.

By his assemblies Charles succeeded in making his great men feel that they were Franks, and that they were ruled by a man whose statesmanship was beyond question, and who was their superior in war and in the art of government. Thus tendencies to isolation were checked, and the growing strength of the local powers held under control. Perhaps one of the reasons of his success was that, like Dunstan and Edgar and Canute, he allowed different parts of his empire to preserve their own laws, customs, and language.

To convert into Franks all the various nationalities under his sway would have proved an impossible task, and Charles wisely confined himself to enforcing obedience to the central government. Every man, according as he was Bavarian or Lombard, Frank or Roman, Goth or Alaman, layman or cleric, might claim to be judged *secundum legem patriæ suæ.* "So great was the diversity of laws that you would often meet with it, not only in countries or cities, but even in single houses. For it would often happen that five men would be sitting or walking together and not one of them would have the same law with any other."

Of the three great political events of Charles's reign, the conquest of Italy, the consolidation of the Frankish kingdom, and the assumption of the imperial title, each has in some degree affected the later history of France. In continuing his father's policy to the papal see Charles pursued a policy which later French kings frequently followed, not always to their advantage. In assuming the imperial title Charles acted under the influence of a noble idea, and the great institution which he gave to Europe was in many ways a useful and beneficent one. To revive the old world-wide empire and to convert it into a *civitas Dei* was worthy of a man of Charles's enterprise. But though it was the "base of the political system of the middle ages . . . it was the origin of that great quarrel which disturbed the West for three centuries—the quarrel of the empire and the priesthood." In the work of consolidating the Frankish kingdoms Charles's success was ephemeral. Territorial sovereignty had begun to assert itself in the rise of the power of the great men, though Charles fought steadily against the inevitable course of things. His many-sided activity as well as the limitations of his work has been well summarized by Guizot: "The huge empire could not survive the powerful hand that had fashioned it, but none the less had a great work been accomplished: the invasion of the barbarians in the West was arrested; Germany herself ceased to be the theatre of incessant fluctuations of wandering tribes; the states there, formed by the dismemberment of the great emperor's inheritance, grew solid by degrees, and became the dike which stopped the human inundation that had desolated Europe for four centuries. Peoples and governments were more settled, and modern social order began to develop itself. This is the vast result of the reign of Charles, the dominant fact of the epoch." *

Closely connected with Charles's restoration of the Church was his revival of learning. He established new schools, and restored old ones. Besides Alcuin, other learned men were appointed to posts during his reign. Leitradus from Noricum was made Archbishop of Lyons, and Theodolphus the Goth Bishop of Orléans. Eginhard, the chronicler of Charles's doings; Smaragdus, abbot of Saint Mihiel, who compiled a Latin grammar; Engelbert, a writer of Latin verses, who married the emperor's sister—are names of men who aided in spreading abroad knowledge. In his palace school, in which teachers and scholars were maintained out of the imperial treasury, Alcuin taught and the emperor himself was a pupil. Charles's enthusiasm for learning and education was perhaps stimulated by his visits to Italy, and from Rome he brought teachers of music and grammar.

Though the results of this revival of education were not very striking, at all events they were permanent. With Alcuin's removal from York the primacy of letters passed to the palace school of Charles the Great, and, though the connection between the Church and education was abused during the dark period from the ninth to the twelfth century, the lamp of learning in France was never allowed to go out altogether.

The Frankish power attained its zenith under Charles.

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* Guizot, Essais sur l'histoire de France, iii, p. 76 (ed. 1836).

Gaul was only a portion of his empire, and Aquitaine and Neustria merely subject provinces. France properly so called had no existence, Paris was merely a provincial town, the French language as yet had no being. Charles himself had realized how impossible it was for his vast empire to remain permanently united under one head, and, like the Merovingians, he arranged a division among his sons. A most elaborate system was devised by which it was settled that all the minor kings were by a sort of federal bond to recognise the authority of one emperor.

In his arrangements Charles showed that he never entertained the idea of a kingdom like modern France being set up. Aquitaine was raised into something like a national kingdom under Louis, but northern France and northern Germany were, according to the great emperor's plan, to be ruled over by his son Charles, who would thus reign on both sides of the Rhine.

Though his empire did not last, the history of Europe was for some seven hundred years profoundly modified by the life and deeds of Charles the Great. He died on January 24, 814, and was buried at Aachen.

CHAPTER IV

HUGH CAPET AND PARIS

In 843, at the Treaty of Verdun, the great Carolingian empire finally broke up, and to Charles the Bald was assigned the whole country west of the Meuse, the Seine, and the Rhone.

Charles the Great's scheme of governing Western Christendom by an emperor assisted by a number of subject kings of his kindred had broken down, and the history of the empire from Charles's death in 814 to the Treaty of Verdun in 843 is a history of continual struggles between the emperor's descendants.

Louis the Debonair, or Pious, had succeeded Charles and ruled till 840. During his reign the Church increased its power and pretensions, civil wars raged, the Danes appeared in force, the Saxons landed in Italy. His three sons were unable to keep at peace with each other, and the partition at Verdun in 843 was the result. The imperial conception of Charles the Great vanished, and the history of the modern kingdom of France begins.

But it was some years before Western Francia really developed into the modern French kingdom, and till the accession of Hugh Capet in 987 the descendants of Charles the Great continued to reign.

These later Carolingians were, however, more German than French; they had little hold on Brittany, Aquitaine, or Septimania; they could not restrain the great feudal lords; they had rarely much power except over Laon, their capital, and its dependencies; and they failed to protect France from the ravages of the Northmen. It has been said with some truth that under their rule France " was no proper French kingdom, but a dying branch of the empire of Charles the Great." Since the death of Charles all the forces which he had held in check had broken loose. The dukes and counts took advantage of the weakness of the central power and made their position hereditary and practically independent.

During the Merovingian reigns there had been at any rate a permanent though perhaps a vacillating progress toward union and civilization. Of this progress the reign of Charles the Great was the high-water mark. The darkest hour in early English history was the period from the death of Ethelwulf to the Treaty of Wedmore (878); the worst period in early French history was that extending from the Treaty of Verdun to the middle of the tenth century, and of those evil years the ones between 843 and 887 were the most disastrous.

During this period France fell back into disunion and weakness, and was compelled to rely on the forces of feudalism as a means of defending herself against the dangers of foreign invasion and internal anarchy.

During the decline and fall of the Carolingian dynasty feudalism saved society from total shipwreck and steadily strengthened itself until it placed Hugh Capet on the throne. His accession meant more than the mere victory of the feudal elements of society: it implied the victory of the French-speaking over the German-speaking inhabitants, of Paris over Laon. Many causes may be adduced for the fall of the Carolings and the rise of the Capetians, such as the feebleness of the kings, the influence of the great churchmen, the growth of the practice of commendation, which led the smaller landowners to place themselves under the nearest lord, to the weakening of the central government—a practice restrained by William the Conqueror by the oath of Salisbury. But the principal cause of the victory of feudalism and the accession of the Capetian dynasty is to be found on the one hand in the inability of the Carolings to defend France from the attacks of the Vikings, and on the other hand in the resistance of Paris under the Dukes of Paris to the invaders.

After 843 the main problem which confronted the Frankish no less than the English rulers was how to deal firmly and successfully with the invasions of the Scandinavian pirates. It was the failure of the Carolingian monarchs to solve this problem adequately which led to and justified their fall.

The inroads of these pirates had given Charles the Great considerable anxiety and trouble, and his son Louis the Debonair had driven them away. But, taking advantage of the internecine quarrels among his sons, they soon returned, and just before the Treaty of Verdun they burned the port of Nantes. After this exploit their attacks became bolder, and, having allied with Pepin of Aquitaine, they sailed up the Seine in 845 and, in spite of "its two bridges and strongly fortified Roman suburbs on the mainland," actually sacked part of Paris. This success, combined with Charles the Bald's fatal policy of trying to buy them off, still more encouraged the Northmen, who continued for many years to raid different parts of Neustria, plundering Bordeaux, burning Tours, and in 853 attempting to seize Orléans. In 857 they wrought frightful havoc among the churches of Paris; that of Saint Geneviève was burned, while others only escaped by paying large sums of money.

Eventually large bodies of these pirates settled at the mouths of the Somme, Seine, Loire, and Garonne, and their ravages became so serious that in 864 Charles the Bald issued the edict of Pistres for improving the Frankish army and for blocking the great rivers by fortified bridges. It was through the bridges now built across the Seine that Paris held out when again besieged in 885 by a great host of Vikings. In 881 at Sancourt Louis III and the Franks, to the great joy of Western Christendom, had overthrown the Northmen, but Louis died shortly afterward, and his brother and successor King Carloman, who had returned to the suicidal policy of bribing the Northmen, in 884.

The new king and emperor, Charles the Fat, was as incapable as Carloman to adopt a vigorous policy, and when the great siege of Paris began in November, 885, its defence was successfully undertaken by Odo or Eudes, Count of Paris, aided by Gozlin the bishop, Count Ragnar, and Hugh, "first of abbots." The Northmen apparently intended to take Paris, subdue the whole surrounding country, and settle down. The future of the rising kingdom of France depended on the successful resistance of Paris. Seven hundred ships had conveyed some forty thousand Vikings up the Seine, and Paris was beset on all sides; till October, 886, i. e., for more than eleven months, the defence of Paris was bravely maintained, and the Northmen, unskilled in sieges, failed in their attacks The deeds of Odo and his valiant supporters have been fully described by an eyewitness of and sharer in the defence:

> "Hic consul venerabatur, Rex atque futurus,
> Urbis erat tutor, regni venturus et altor."

During the siege Bishop Gozlin died, and Odo was left with the responsibility of carrying on the defence. Help from without became necessary, and Odo went forth to implore the emperor to come to the aid of Paris. Henry, Duke of the Eastern Franks, who had already made one fruitless attempt to bring relief, came with an army towards the end of the summer of 886. But he was slain by the Northmen, and Paris was again left to its own resources.

At last Charles the Fat arrived with the forces of the empire, but instead of attacking the besiegers he bought them off and allowed them to pass up the Seine to Burgundy.

Paris was saved, but while the emperor had lost all hold on his subjects the reputation of Count Odo was greatly increased. He was now by imperial grant given all the possessions of his father, Robert the Strong, some of whose domains had been held by his son Hugh, the abbot, who had died during the siege.

In 888 Charles the Fat, who had been deposed, died, the dismemberment of the Carolingian empire was completed, and six states were set up—Italy, Germany, Provence, Transjurane, Burgundy, and France.

As France was still threatened by the Northmen who remained on the Seine, it was impossible to give the

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throne to the Carolingian heir, Charles the Simple, Carloman's youngest brother. He was only eight years old, and a strong and able ruler was required. The choice, therefore, of the Neustrian aristocracy fell naturally on Odo, the Count of Paris, of Blois, and of Orleans, the gallant defender of the city of Paris in the late siege. He was the son of Robert the Strong, founder of the Robertian line, who it is said was a Saxon brought into France by Charles the Great, and employed by Charles the Bald to defend the country between the Seine and the Loire, where he acquired vast possessions. He fell in 866, fighting bravely against the Vikings at Brissarthe. His son Odo inherited with the countship of Paris the family lands in Anjou, Touraine, Champagne, and Poitou, and being distinguished not only for bravery, but also for justice, piety, and general ability, it is not surprising that he was chosen king.

His election necessarily resulted in a further development of the power of the great fiefs in France. Odo was merely a *primus inter pares*, and at least a dozen other nobles looked on him as their equal. Hereditary right coupled with capacity alone secured willing obedience, and under Odo a superficial unity was only maintained through the necessity of making head against the attacks of the Northmen. Had it not been for the imminence of this danger the fatal weakness of owing his power to the Teutonic right of election alone would have been more obvious in his reign.

As it was, he had no sooner driven off the Danes (who had under Rollo or Hrolf again besieged Paris in 889 for three months, only retiring on money being given them), after inflicting on them a crushing defeat at Montpensier, than he was forced to spend the rest of his days in contending against Charles the Simple.

Odo died in 898, and his brother and heir wisely contented himself with the duchy of France—the lands of Paris, Orléans, Chartres, Tours, Le Mans, and Beauvais, and did homage to the Caroling king, Charles the Simple.

Till 929 Charles was king, and showed himself fully alive to the necessity of defending France from the Northmen. But in 911 he made the Treaty of Clair-sur-Epte with Hrolf, planting the Northmen permanently on the lower Seine. This experiment proved very successful, and by handing over Normandy Charles saved the rest of France from conquest, and gave it a period of repose from external attack. Paris was now saved from all danger of Scandinavian attacks, and had a neighbour who, though shutting her off from the sea, quickly adopted her religion, language, and manners.

But the rivalry between the later Carolingians and the Robertian house assumed serious proportions after the Treaty of Clair-sur-Epte, for Robert, Count of Paris, raised a rebellion and was crowned king in 922. But the following year he fell in battle at Soissons, and his revolt was continued by other great nobles and ended in the murder of Charles the Simple at Péronne in 929, an event which Louis XI remembered at the time of his famous interview with Charles the Bold.

On the death of Robert, Rudolf of Burgundy reigned from 923 to 936, but on his death Hugh the Great, Count of Paris and son of Duke Robert, wisely caused Louis IV (or Louis d'Outremer), son of Charles the Simple, to be brought over from the court of Athelstan and crowned king. Hugh was rewarded by the renewal of the title "Duke of the French" borne by his father, Robert. This title implied a military authority over the various lands situated north of the Seine, and Hugh became the most powerful subject in the kingdom. His position was similar to that of the justiciar in Anglo-Norman days, or to that of a mayor of the palace, with this difference that Louis IV was by no means a *roi fainéant.*

He was a warrior, and at one time with the aid of Otto the Great fought against Count Hugh. Peace, however, was made, and when, in 954, Louis died his son Lothair, then only thirteen years old, was chosen king by Hugh's influence. Two years later Hugh died. Unlike his predecessors, he was a statesman who realized that the true policy of his house was to play a waiting game.

None of his house did more for its future fortunes than did Hugh. To his sagacity in accumulating fiefs, in heaping up treasure, and in wisely declining the royal dignity in 936 on the death of Rudolf, is due the fact that his son Hugh Capet became the founder of the Capetian line.

Like his father, Hugh Capet—so called either because he wore the cope of the abbot of St. Martin's at Tours, or because of the size of his head—was a shrewd tactician. He had no difficulty in holding his own against Lothair, the Caroling king, when he attempted to shake himself free from the duke's influence and to make head against the feudal nobility. Hugh was supported by the Emperor Otto II and by the Church, which, represented by Adalberon, Archbishop of Rheims, and the famous

Gerbert, afterward Pope Sylvester II, had hitherto been the firm support of the Carolings.

In 986 Lothair died, his son Louis V in 987, and with him ended the Carolingian line of kings. Unlike the later Merovingians, the last three Carolings were men of energy and resource. But their kingdom had no territorial basis, and without territory which could afford them men and money they were utterly unable to hold their own against the power of the feudal nobles.

The time had now come for the long struggle between these feudal nobles and the Caroling kings, between Paris and Laon, to end. Things were ripe for a revolution, and the nobles could not have found a better candidate than Hugh Capet. The domain of the Duke of France consisted of a long strip of land extending from the mouth of the Somme to the Loire, with Normandy on one side and Burgundy, Champagne, and Flanders on the other. The Seine, with Paris situated on it, crossed this narrow strip, cutting it well-nigh in half. Hugh therefore had the immense advantage of occupying a central position in what we may call France. Lorraine, Arles, and Franche-Comté held of the emperor, and were practically German; the Counts of Flanders, Vermandois, and Champagne and the Dukes of Normandy, Brittany, Burgundy, and Aquitaine looked on themselves as Hugh Capet's equals. But he was strongest of them all, and not only was lord of the city and county of Paris, but was lay abbot of Saint Denis, the most celebrated church in France. Other important cities and counties also held of him, such as the cities of Orléans and Chartres and the counties of Blois, Perche, Touraine, and Maine.

Hugh Capet's position therefore fitted him for the rank of king, and in 987 several circumstances specially favored his candidature. If there was a Caroling heir it was Charles, Duke of Lorraine, uncle of Louis V, the last Caroling king. But Charles owed allegiance to the emperor, and was regarded as a German. The barons therefore put him on one side and the most powerful of Hugh's peers, the Dukes of Burgundy and Normandy, took the lead in supporting his election. The Capetians were related to Burgundy, for the duke was Hugh's brother, and the Carolings had completely alienated the Normans, whose duke was Hugh's brother-in-law, by oppressing their duke, Richard the Fearless. With the support of Burgundy and Normandy and that of the other great nobles, such as the Duke of Aquitaine, a brother-in-law, and the Count of Vermandois, a connection of Hugh's, went that of the Church. Under the influence of Gerbert, Hugh was at Noyon elected king, and at Rheims his election was confirmed by the Archbishop Adalbero, who crowned him King of the Franks. And thus "in this time failed the lineage of 'Challemaine' in France, and then by common assent was the kingship granted to 'Huon Chapette,' who was right prudent and valiant, bold and brave, so long as he lived."

The accession of Hugh Capet completed the process begun at the Treaty of Verdun in 843, and it is regarded as the starting point of all later French history. France, since Charles the Great's death, had become divided among a number of great fiefs, and while the Carolings, unfortunately for themselves, had no territories, and so had no solid basis of feudal support, Hugh Capet had the advantage of being the possessor of one of the strongest fiefs in France. His election can be regarded as the triumph of nationality, or of feudalism, or of the Church. He belonged to a family which had saved Paris from capture. Being lord to the Isle of France, he was essentially a Frenchman, one of the new Romance people which had grown up through the amalgamation of the conquering Franks and the conquered Romans. In speech and interests he, like his immediate predecessors, was distinctly French.

Besides the royal domains France in 987 consisted of six principalities, afterward called the six lay peerages —Flanders, Normandy, Burgundy, Champagne, Aquitaine, and Toulouse—and in these principalities the princes were practically independent of the kings, though the feudal superiority of the French crown extended over their states.

Louis d'Outremer could only understand German, while the Capetian kings acquired the idiom of northern France, and Robert, the second of his race, was in the words of the chronicler "linguæ Gallicæ peritia facundissimus." The German of the Merovingians retreated beyond the Rhine, the rustic Latin used by the Carolingians was banished to the cloister, and in France the Romance tongue was generally adopted, and two dialects, the *langue d'oc* and the *langue d'oil,* were formed, the one used in southern, the other in northern France.

The Carolings had been more German than French; if there was a rebellion they fled into Germany and appealed to the Emperor. Hugh Capet was a Neustrian baron, and Paris was his capital, though at that time it was simply the chief town of a dukedom and was little known.

His election implied the triumph of nationality. It must always be remembered in connection with Hugh Capet's accession that Paris and its dukedom had been for years merely the centre of a feudal system which revolved round it, and became gradually the nucleus of the French monarchy.

It was not till some four hundred years had passed that the great feudal states were incorporated with the crown of France. The history of these annexations is the history of the aggressions of Paris. Modern France therefore in no way "represents ancient Gaul or Carolingian Francia." Modern France has grown in the same way as Prussia and Sardinia have grown, by annexing divers states and forming thereby a strong centralized monarchy.

The nobles who supported Hugh Capet's election looked upon him simply as a great feudatory who held views similar to their own. The feudal system had indeed saved Europe from a fresh supremacy of barbarism; Alfred and his successors in England owed their triumph over the Danes to the cavalry of the Thegns, while, with the aid of the feudal nobles, led by the Robertian house, France had driven off all the Northmen with the exception of Rollo and his followers, who had been allowed to settle in Normandy. In Germany, Italy, and Provence the great lords had been equally successful, and in the tenth century Europe was in the hands of a triumphant militant feudalism. Hugh Capet and his immediate successors understood the position in which they stood and its limitations, and Hugh showed his appreciation of it when he promised to take no step of importance without consulting the tenants in chief. A powerful duke, he found himself a weak king. It was in reality the interest of the feudatories not to have a king at all. But a king was necessary to the feudal system, and when the magnates took the advice of Gerbert and elected Hugh Capet they thought he would remain like as they were; they did not realize that there was always a tendency among the clergy and people to look upon royalty as of divine origin, nor did they foresee that the monarchical centre would gradually be regarded as the "real heart of French national life."

But if Hugh Capet's succession was regarded with favour by the feudal lords the Church had every right to look upon it as in some respects her own especial work. Adalbero and Gerbert had quarrelled with the two last Carolingian kings and given their support to Hugh. The wisdom of this policy is easily appreciated when we remember that Hugh was a man who could preserve order, and who, moreover, had much Church patronage in his hands. The Duke of France was indeed worth conciliating, for, being abbot of Saint Denis, near Paris, and of Saint Martin, at Tours, he was regarded as a kind of lay head of the Church, and had in his gift many rich abbeys and benefices. But the Church had higher motives in supporting Hugh than merely those of self-advantage. In spite of her own shortcomings the Church in its best representatives always saw in a powerful king the only check upon unbridled license and anarchy. Amid the horrors and oftentimes chaos of feudal times the only chance of orderly rule lay in the monarchy. Owing to the growth of feudalism, every part of France was planted with petty tyrants whose cruel and predatory instincts could only be restrained by a strong king. The Carolings could not defend the Church from feudal violence, nor had they lands to give to bishoprics and monasteries. Adalbero and Gerbert were men who fully realized the importance of electing such a king, and it was to them that Hugh owed his election.

The Church regarded the Capetian dynasty as the lawful heir of the Merovingian and Carolingian monarchies, and as the Church was the principal author of the revolution of 987, so did she continue to be the strongest and most loyal supporter of the Capetian line of kings. Hugh Capet was brought into alliance with the see of Rome, and became the "eldest son of the Church."

It is therefore evident that without the support of the Church Hugh Capet would have failed to secure the crown; it is equally true that his election was at the time a triumph for feudalism, though it proved in the end fatal to the feudal system; and lastly, it cannot be gainsaid that, looking back, we can trace the definite beginning of French nationality, of French national life, to the establishment of the Capetian dynasty, which had its roots in the soil of France.

At the time of Hugh Capet's accession there was no sign of the eventual triumph of the monarchy. He was simply *primus inter pares*, one of a number of great nobles. No country was more divided in feeling and interest than was the kingdom of the West Franks, over whom he nominally ruled. Each of the provincial nationalities which composed France was as strong and as consolidated as that of which Paris was the capital.

There was no feeling of patriotism, no sentiment of nationality in France as a whole. Everywhere, as in England, local feeling was predominant. It was impossible, in the feudal society of which Hugh Capet was the leading representative, that the national ideal could find a place.

The feudal system which revolved round the French king at the time of Hugh Capet's accession implied the existence of strong local states, aristocratic isolation, and chronic anarchy.

Of these states Normandy owed its importance to the Treaty of Clair-sur-Epte. The Northmen soon became more French than the French themselves; they introduced into their new home a bracing influence, they took the lead in all the great movements of the time. Restless and energetic, the Normans conquered England and Sicily, they led the way in the crusades, they popularized in Western Europe French ideas, language, and customs. Brittany had only recovered from the attacks of the Northmen in the tenth century There the Celtic and Gallo-Roman influences produced under Alan Barbetorte, who died in 952, a state, the independent character of which was very marked as late as the French Revolution. Anjou, Champagne, Blois, Vermandois, and Flanders were all organized feudal states, with their own peculiar characteristics; while south of the Loire Toulouse, Gascony, and Poitou, with which went in the tenth century the old duchy of Aquitaine, were even more independent of the central authority.

Over this divided, anarchic, and turbulent land Hugh Capet was elected ruler. During his reign and those of his immediate successors the nobles and clergy to some extent enjoyed independence. But Hugh and his descendants provided for the hereditary transmission of the crown by associating with them during their lives their eldest sons as kings, and as events proved the early Capets were not as powerless as has been imagined.

From the accession of Hugh Capet the process begins of converting the nominal feudal superiority of the crown into a direct sovereignty over the whole kingdom, and simultaneously with this process goes that of annexing states like Provence, Lorraine, and Savoy, which formed no part of the Capetian monarchy.

Hugh and his immediate descendants began these processes, which later kings continued. The history of the Capetian dynasty is essentially a story of progress, of the slow development of nationality, and of the gradual weakening of the feudal influences. The early Capets had possessions in Picardy, Champagne, Berri; the seaport of Montreuil in Ponthieu, a paramount influence in Burgundy, besides their palaces in Laon, Soissons, Auxerre, and Sens.

The history of their reigns emphatically forbids us to believe that under them royalty was a *quantité négligeable.*

Hugh Capet asserted with success the independence of France; his successor Robert (996–1031) increased the royal domain and the prestige of the crown. Though Henry I (1031–1060) was unsuccessful in most of his enterprises, he at least showed a courage and perseverance which some of his successors imitated with advantage; and Philip I (1061–1108) definitely increased the royal domain by the absorption of the Vexin and the Valois, which were valuable as a protection to Paris from attacks from the side of Normandy or Champagne. He placed his brother in Vermandois, and obtained in Bourges a hold on the country south of the Loire. Still these small additions of territory could not give the monarchy the resources and the material force required to enable it to fulfil its destiny.

During most of the eleventh century France was certainly little more than a geographical expression, and had little political unity. But with the twelfth century several movements began to exert a telling influence on the fortunes of France and on the future of feudalism.

Of these movements the crusades were the most important.

CHAPTER V

FRANCE AND THE EAST

THE crusades might almost be said to have created modern France. They began at the close of the eleventh century, the conquest of Jerusalem by the first crusaders taking place in 1099. At that time Philip I was king of France and feudalism was supreme. In 1291 Acre was lost to the Saracens and the crusades came to an end. By that date the French monarchy was rapidly vanquishing the great feudatories and annexing their territory. Vermandois had been absorbed. Normandy and Languedoc had been conquered. Flanders, Brittany, Burgundy, and Aquitaine alone of the great fiefs preserved their independence. The serried phalanx of the all-powerful barons had been once and for all broken; the growth of the royal power and of the territorial unity of France had advanced steadily and successfully together.

The death of Philip I, in 1108, and the accession of Louis I proved a fresh starting point in French history, and with the opening of the twelfth century the extension of the royal power and the rise of the communes had a decisive effect on the fortunes of France.

Attacked simultaneously from above and below, feudalism was forced to yield. But though the spoils went in large measure to the monarchy, the whole nation was benefited by the result of the struggle. Between the accession of Louis VI and the death of Saint Louis or Louis IX the political consolidation of France was carried out, the growth of a national sentiment was fostered, the preponderance of French ideas, customs, and language throughout Western Christendom was assured, and France became incontestably the first power in Europe. This change in the condition of things in France, in the whole organization of her society, and in her position in Europe was mainly due to the crusades. Had it not been for the crusades the French kings would have had far greater difficulty in their task of eliminating feudalism from government, the communes could hardly have hoped for so marked an improvement in their fortunes, and France would have remained behind other countries in the race towards union and consolidation.

Other causes no doubt there were of the weakening of the feudal forces, such as the personal ability of the French kings, their alliance with the Church, and the break-up of the empire of Henry II of England. But it was the crusades which enabled the French monarchs to take advantage of these and other circumstances, to cut at the root of feudal ideas, and to work for the consolidation of France into a great state. They were part of that general "revivification of the human spirit" which in the twelfth century found expression in the revival of monasticism, in the rise of the universities, in the growth of the communes.

The crusades were essentially a Frankish movement, and the share taken by the French makes these expeditions important in their national history. The first crusade was almost exclusively their work; they divided the second (1147) with the Germans; the third (1190) with the English; the fourth (1202) with the Venetians, when they established the Latin Empire of the East. The fifth (1217) and sixth (1228) are of little importance, but the seventh (1248) and the eighth (1270) were exclusively French.

For centuries Jerusalem had been the goal of pilgrimages from Europe, which, though checked at times by the occupation of the holy city by one or other of the fanatical sects which flourished after the fall of the great caliphate, had increased in number in the eleventh century. The advance and conquests of the Seljukian Turks had again stopped the influx of Christian pilgrims to Palestine, but it was not till the Turkish conquest of Jerusalem in 1076, followed by the account of the wrongs of Alexius at the Council of Piacenza, that Urban II decided to urge a holy war upon Europe. Alexius had already had experience of the military qualities of the Franks, for Robert Guiscard, the Norman ruler of Sicily and the south of Italy, had in 1031 invaded Macedonia and Thessaly. It was therefore a politic step on the part of the Emperor to secure the aid of the Latin races in his struggle against the Turks. The appeal of Urban at the Council of Clermont in 1095, followed by the preaching of Peter the Hermit and others, stirred Western Christendom to its depths.

At the time of the accession of Hugh Capet religion was at a low ebb in Europe. Feudalism had done its work in beating back barbarism and defending Europe from its onslaught. But though in many ways an excellent fighting machine, feudalism was unfit to govern [illegible] to direct the lives of men. In the latter half of the tenth century it was supreme, and its influence was fatal to all progress. The standard of Christian life declined; the clergy were becoming secular; the papacy was held in little respect.

To afford men an opportunity of escaping from the rule of ferocity and greed, to rouse them to a sense of higher things, to break the bonds of feudal militarism, were the objects of the Cluniac revival. Its ideas were represented by Hildebrand, and led to what was called the Hildebrandine reformation. A new type of popes appeared, the Church became vigorous and spiritual, the Cistercians, Carthusians, and other orders were founded, magnificent cathedrals and churches were built; on all sides was seen an awakening of religious feeling.

Just when the Hildebrandine revival was at its height came the appeal of Alexius, the Eastern Emperor, for aid against the Seljukian Turks.

Europe awoke to the fact that the Turks had not only conquered Palestine and were endangering the holy places, but were threatening Constantinople. No country showed greater enthusiasm in the first crusade than France. In all the four armies which proceeded to Constantinople the French were conspicuous and supplied most of the pilgrims. Raymond IV of Toulouse headed one band, composed of Provençals and Italians, while a large collection of Germans and men from the north of France set forth, such as Baldwin of Hainault, Hugh of Saint Pol, Godfrey of Lower Lorraine, known in history as Godfrey of Bouillon, and others. A third force, colected mainly in Italy, followed Bohemond of Tarentum, a Norman prince, and a fourth, composed entirely of Frenchmen, was led by Hugh, Count of Vermandois, brother of the French king, Robert, Duke of Normandy, and the Counts of Chartres and Flanders. Thus many of the greatest French lords left France and travelled to Palestine. Success crowned their efforts. Jerusalem was taken on July 15, 1099, and in August southern Palestine was secured by a victory at Ascalon from all danger of an Egyptian attack. France had thus within three years conquered a new kingdom in the East, and Syria was divided into four principalities. Godfrey of Bouillon held the government of Jerusalem, and other French princes were placed over Antioch, Edessa, and Tripoli. After Godfrey's death, in 1100, Baldwin I (1100–1113), brother of Godfrey, his nephew, Baldwin II (1113–1130), and his son-in-law, Fulk, Count of Anjou (1130–1143), each became in turn King of Jerusalem, and under them the Latin state reached its zenith. As in Canada in the seventeenth century, so in Syria the French lords reproduced feudalism.

The kingdom of Jerusalem and its dependent states were organized on feudal lines, and the ideal aimed at by the crusaders is to be found in the Assizes of Jerusalem, which picture a feudal state. Military orders, such as the Templars and Knights of St. John, were formed, and the language of northern France was used generally in Syria.

In 1144 the sudden conquest of Edessa by the Atabek Turks warned the crusaders that their kingdom was not built on solid foundations. At Vézelay at Easter in 1146, Saint Bernard, like Peter the Hermit, roused the

French nation, and Louis VII went to Palestine. The second crusade had little result, and from that time to the conquest of Jerusalem by Saladin in 1157 the prosperity of the Latin kingdom began to decline. Feudalism as a means of government had no stability, and a William the Conqueror or a Henry II was required to prevent the complete collapse of the work of Godfrey of Bouillon and his fellow-crusaders.

The conquests of Saladin, which in a few months demolished the kingdom of the Franks in Syria, reducing it to a few seacoast towns and castles, led immediately to the third crusade, which, unlike the first crusade, carried out as it was by the lesser feudal princes, was initiated and conducted by the great kings of Europe.

Frederick Barbarossa and his army had perished in Asia Minor when Philip Augustus and Richard I started in 1190. As usual the French nobles were largely represented, there being present with the army Theobald V of Blois, Henry II, Count of Champagne, and Philip of Alsace.

Acre was taken in 1191, and shortly afterward Philip Augustus returned home, with many of the French. In September, 1192, Richard made a truce with Saladin, and having given Cyprus to Guy of Lusignan he departed, leaving Henry of Champagne titular King of Jerusalem. Acre became an important centre, and the establishment of the Latin kingdom of Cyprus was a definite advance against the infidels. The Christian power in the East was thus strengthened, though the great and heroic epoch of the crusades was over.

In 1201, when the fourth crusade was organized at the bidding of Innocent III, and partly in response to the preaching of Fulk of Neuilly, none of the great kings of Europe (being fully occupied with their own schemes of aggrandizement) gave it their personal support. Its leaders were, like those in the first crusade, French nobles. Theobald III, Count of Champagne, took the lead, and was accompanied by Louis, Count of Blois, Baldwin IX, Count of Flanders, and his brothers Eustace and Henry, Simon de Montfort, and Geoffrey of Villardouin, who has written an account of the expedition. Long delays took place, and on the death of the Count of Champagne, Boniface of Montferrat was appointed general-in-chief. Falling into a trap laid for them by the Venetians, the crusaders allowed themselves to be diverted from their original object, and in 1203 took Constantinople, and after a short period of revolution conquered it a second time in April, 1204. The Latin Empire was at once partitioned and organized, Count Baldwin of Flanders was elected emperor, a feudal state set up, and Boniface of Montferrat made King of Thessalonica.

Louis of Blois became Duke of Nicæa; Villardouin Prince of Achaia; and Odo of La Roche, Lord of Athens; other crusaders were given fiefs in various parts of the empire. Till 1261, when Michael VIII conquered Constantinople, the Latin Empire continued under French emperors, and even after its fall the Latin power existed in the Peloponnesus and the islands for some years longer.

While French adventurers were imitating the deeds of the Normans in the eleventh century (though in doing so they were diverting much valuable energy from the

Christian East), the fortunes of the kingdom of Jerusalem were still able to arouse some interest in Europe. After Frederick II had made his treaty with the Sultan of Egypt in 1229 and returned, Palestine was the scene of revolts and wars. At length, in 1244, the Charismians suddenly fell upon Jerusalem and slew its inhabitants. A Christian force under Walter of Brienne which marched against them was cut to pieces near Gaza, and the power of the French in Palestine never recovered the effects of this disaster.

The Latin Christians appealed to Louis IX of France, and in response he led two crusades, the first in 1248, the second in 1270. Both failed in their objects. The first, of which Joinville gives an interesting account, occupied some four years, and resulted in the rebuilding of Jaffa, Sidon, and Cæsarea; the second caused Louis's death, on August 24, 1270, near Tunis. With him ended all hope of holding a Latin kingdom in the East.

The crusades had revealed to Europe the energy and capacities of the French people. For nearly two hundred years successive French kings had stood forth as the defenders of the Christian religion and French culture in the farthest outpost held by Europeans against the Turks. The first crusade had succeeded in averting the fall of the Eastern Empire for many years, and had thus fulfilled one of the objects of Gregory VII and Urban II in stirring up the expeditions to the East. The Seljukian Turks in the eleventh century were advancing rapidly, and had Constantinople fallen even in the middle of the twelfth century the serious effect upon the social and political life of Europe cannot be exaggerated. French enterprise, though it allowed itself in the fourth crusade to be led into wrong channels, had at any rate occupied Islamism for two centuries, and even after its retreat left in Cyprus, Rhodes, and the developed maritime resources of Venice fresh hindrances to an easy advance westward by way of the Mediterranean.

While the crusades proved of infinite value to Christendom by keeping back the torrent of barbarian invasion, Western Europe, and especially France, experienced an immediate and general improvement in the conditions of social life. Enormous numbers of nobles, of whom the majority were French, proceeded to the crusades.

To raise money they sold many rights to towns and peasants. Their absence abroad, followed in many cases by their deaths, gave the kings of France opportunities, which they seized; and gradually, as the smaller fiefs were swallowed up by the greater lordships, so were the greater lordships by the royal power. "The continued absence of the petty baronage in the East, and its perpetual decimation under the pressure of debt and travel, battle and disease, helped to concentrate authority in the hands of the royal officers." The conduct of Robert of Normandy and Richard I of England, who sold charters and towns, are well-known instances of the eagerness of the crusaders to sell anything to raise money, and useful examples of the methods by which the towns benefited by the crusades. But no country gained greater political consolidation from the crusades than did France.

The crusades proved fatal to the supremacy of the French feudal nobility, who were drawn away in large numbers to Palestine. As long as they remained at home peace and progress were impossible, but abroad they used their energies to good purpose, and spread over the civilized world the fame of the French nation. Fortunately for France her kings during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries pursued steadily their true policy, which was to defend their frontiers, to impose their authority on the nobles, and to encourage the growth of town life. Louis VI (1108–1137) was the first French king to take advantage of the crusading movement. Allied with the Church and well served by Suger, he overthrew the feudal castles on the Seine and the Oise; he established his predominance completely over the royal domain—the Isle of France—and he drove his chief opponent, Hugh of Le Puiset, to the Holy Land. Then taking advantage of the more tranquil times which owing to the crusades prevailed in France, he aided the rising communal movement by granting a large number of charters to towns, and at the same time he furthered the due administration of justice.

His successor, Louis VII (1137–1180), only went on the second crusade under compulsion. In spite of endless difficulties owing to the marriage of his divorced wife Eleanor to Henry II of England, Louis furthered the cause of the monarchy. Like his father, he remained closely allied with the Church; like his father, he built new towns and developed ancient ones. His successor, Philip Augustus (1180–1223), is rightly considered one of the founders of the French monarchy, and he proved not only an able administrator, but one of the great consolidators of the realm.

Feeling able to take advantage of the weakness of his enemies, of the divisions among the barons, and of the rising power of the communes, Philip successfully expelled John of England from Normandy, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and Poitou, and destroyed a serious feudal attack on him at Bouvines in 1214.

Like Louis VII, he only went on a crusade with reluctance, and hurried home for the purpose of organizing an invasion of the English possessions in France.

Under these kings the numbers of the barons lessened, and as the survivors found it necessary to stay at home in order to defend themselves against the aggressions of the royal power, the interest in the crusades diminished.

But their concern for the preservation of their feudal rights came too late; the royal power which so successfully asserted itself in the hands of Philip Augustus was equally triumphant in the reigns of Louis IX and Philip IV.

The influence of religious enthusiasm, the growth of culture, the development of the royal authority—all tended to transform the feudal nobility of France from mere upholders of anarchy into more orderly members of society. In England a somewhat similar process transformed the feudal baronage of the twelfth into the constitutional nobility of the thirteenth century.

As the crusading ideas yielded before the absorption of the Western monarchs in schemes of territorial aggrandizement national unity grew and was fostered in France by the common bonds of interest between the king and the towns. Feudal anarchy having disappeared, the towns could profit from the outburst of commerce which was another result of the crusades, while the peasants equally benefited from the frequent transference of property from the barons to the Church.

Thus the crusades enabled the Capetian kings to turn the tables on the nobles, to stop private wars, and to escape from the bonds which were imposed on Hugh Capet and his immediate successors by the feudal baronage. But the crusades did more, for they enabled Philip Augustus, Louis VII, Louis IX, and Philip IV to show that France, from being a divided country, had become the most prominent nation in Europe, the leader in warlike enterprises, no less than in culture, chivalry, literature, and all the humane arts. So largely represented were the French in the crusades that the crusaders were known as Franks, and one result of the crusades was to spread the French language. French became "the speech of princes, lawyers, and merchants; yet more important was it that it became the recognised language of literature." Brunetto Latino, Dante's master, wrote his chief work, the Tesauro, in French because "it is more delectable and more widely diffused," and in England in the thirteenth century, when the growth of nationality was very marked, the French tongue, art, and manners were commonly adopted in the court and among the upper classes, by the lawyers, and by the leading officials.

In spite of the raid against Constantinople known as the fourth crusade, the effects upon France of the establishment of the short-lived kingdom of Jerusalem and of her efforts to aid the Byzantine Empire were lasting.

French travellers, such as the Franciscan William Rubruquis, sent by Louis IX to the great khan, began to penetrate the mysterious East, and the impetus given to commerce in the Mediterranean proved to be more enduring than many of the direct and immediate effects of the crusades. The bravery and energy shown by the French, the sacrifices made, the numbers of great families who spent their fortunes and gave their lives to drive back the Turks, gave France a strong claim to be the guardian of the holy places. In 1396, to beat back the Turks, who were again threatening Constantinople, many French knights joined Sigismund of Hungary in a gallant but disastrous attempt to overthrow the infidel at Nicopolis. And ever and anon the French in later ages considered the advisability of coming forward as the legal heirs to Palestine and Egypt.

Such projects were dangled before Louis XIV; they were partly executed by Napoleon. The Crimean War was directly caused by a quarrel over the guardianship of the holy places, and at the present day France, though practically powerless in Egypt, still preserves her interest in Jerusalem and its treasures.

The Frankish or Latin kings of Jerusalem thus benefited Europe and France in many ways, and they were the cause of valuable additions to the historical and poetical literature of the day. Ernoul, a French squire, continued the history of William of Tyre; Villehardouin and Joinville, like Ernoul, describe events in which they themselves took part. Similarly the capture of Jerusalem and the subsequent struggles in Palestine inspired many a poet, of whom Richard the Pilgrim and William IX of Poitiers are perhaps the best known. The crusades were the first united effort of Christendom; they were wars for an idea; they were epic in their grandeur. It is therefore not surprising that the gallantry of the French knights was often told in verses and songs which indicate the effect on the Western world of its contact with the East, at the bidding of religious enthusiasm.

It remains to be seen how the French kings were able to identify the monarchical cause, which had gained so marvellously by the absence of many of the feudal barons in the Holy Land, with an orthodox crusade against the Albigenses, and, further, by the conquest of Toulouse to extend the royal dominion to the Mediterranean.

CHAPTER VI

THE ANNEXATION OF TOULOUSE

The crusades were in no sense inspired by religious intolerance or sectarian jealousy. All that was noblest in mankind was concentrated in a series of efforts to restore the holy places to Christian rule. The popes having originated the movement, supported it with all their might.

The crusades enormously increased the power of the papacy, the influence of which upon affairs was clearly seen in England in the reigns of Henry II and John, in Germany in the reign of Frederick II, and in France in the events connected with the Albigensian crusade.

That crusade, unlike those against the Turks, was an example of the tyranny of the popes, and of the deterioration of the crusading spirit; for it was throughout tainted by intolerance and jealousy, and called into being the Holy Inquisition. But to the French monarchy it proved of great value, enabling the government of Louis IX to absorb the lands between the Loire and the Garonne, and to impose upon the south of France the advantages of law and order. The destruction of the independence of Toulouse following the fall of the English power in France, rendered possible a strong and united French nation.

The county of Toulouse had, after the death of Charles the Great, gradually extended its limits till at the beginning of the twelfth century it included all the lands between the Alps and the Rhone, between the Rhone and the Aquitanian border, and between the Pyrenees and the Ebro. These lands represent what is usually called Languedoc, where the dialect, the *langue d'oc*, was spoken and soon reached a high state of literary excellence; while in the north of France several varieties of the *langue d'oil* were spoken until the supremacy of Paris forced upon France the dominant dialect of the Île de France, of which Paris was originally the capital.

Subordinate to the Count of Toulouse were the fiefs of Narbonne, Béziers, which included Albi and Carcassonne, Montpellier, Foix, and the countships of Querci and Rhodez.

The geographical position of Toulouse brought it into close connection with Spain, and marriage alliances increased the ties between the south of France and the Spanish princes. In the middle of the twelfth century Henry II proceeded to enforce the claims of his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, to Toulouse, but Louis VI of France, who had married in 1154 Constance of Castile, resisted the claims and assumed suzerain rights. Henry II, unwilling to war against his feudal superior, yielded, and war was averted, though it was not till the following century that the kings of France secured any real hold on Toulouse and the south of France.

The city of Toulouse was important in Roman times, when it was the headquarters of a garrison which guarded one of the routes passing through the province of Gallia Narbonensis. As the capital of the county of Toulouse, where was spoken a Romance tongue, and where the people early developed an advanced civilization and despised their ruder fellow-countrymen who lived north of the Loire, Toulouse was from 852 the seat of a line of hereditary and powerful counts, and as time went on its importance was increased. While the regions north of the Loire gradually became absorbed into the French monarchy (the battle of Bouvines, in 1214, giving Philip Augustus the permanent possession of Normandy, Maine, Anjou, Touraine, and Poitou), the county of Toulouse, like Aquitaine, showed no signs of a desire for a close union with the French monarchy. In Toulouse commerce had produced ease and luxury, and while peace and prosperity had long been enjoyed by the inhabitants, literature had reached a high state of perfection. Always strongly feudal and antimonarchical, the country south of the Loire, in which feudal violence and premature culture stood in strange contrast, was equally lacking in patriotism and in vigour. Like Aquitaine and Provence, which were subject to the Emperor, Toulouse had become celebrated for the beautiful literature of the troubadours, who towards the end of the twelfth century were at the height of their fame.

The three southern courts had about the same time become the chief intellectual no less than political centres of the country south of the Loire. " In that warm land, where poetry and love, art and architecture, had their home, freedom of opinion and speculation were natural."

The twelfth century was the age of heresies. " The " Catholic faith," said Saint Bernard, " is discussed in the streets and market places. We have fallen upon evil times." But while the influence of the Church gradually succeeded in suppressing the strange doctrines and the heretical sects in Languedoc and Provence, the heresy of the Albigenses, so called because their headquarters were in the town of Albi, showed an unexpected vitality and threatened to become largely the faith of the whole people. The heresy was itself social and philosophical rather than religious. The Albigenses held the philosophical doctrine of the Manichæans, saying that there were two equal and coeternal deities identified respectively with the principles of good and evil, and at the same time they rejected the authority of the Church and bitterly opposed barons and clergy. "If black monks," wrote the poet Peire Cardinal, "may win salvation of God by much eating and by the keeping of women, white monks by fraud, templars and hospitallers by pride, canons by lending money in usury, then for fools I hold Saint Peter and Saint Andrew, who suffered for God such grievous torments. Kings, emperors, counts, and knights were wont to rule the world, but now I see clerks holding dominion over it by robbery, deceit, hypocrisy, force and exhortation." This illustration is only one of many of that Provençal feeling which before the end of the twelfth century had obtained so firm a hold upon the county of Toulouse and its dependencies that no efforts of the Church to re-establish its doctrines were successful. The barons seized on the property of the Church and the whole land was filled with anarchy. It seemed as if the south would begin a municipal and democratic revolution dangerous to the dominion of the Church.

As early as 1177, Raymond V, Count of Toulouse, had sent to the abbey of Citeaux a formal complaint against the heretics, and in 1181, Henry of Clairvaux, the

Cardinal Bishop of Albano, had, by the command of Pope Alexander III, endeavoured to convert the Albigensians. He had failed, and in 1184 Lucius III had instigated an inquisition by the bishops into the presence of heretics within their dioceses. But these peaceful means were unsuccessful; the murders of priests and expulsions of bishops and abbots from their sees and monasteries never ceased; the toleration of even the Jews, who could hold lands in Languedoc, continued; and the study of medicine and Aristotle, both of which studies were opposed to Rome, was encouraged. The mere possibility of a southern kingdom being set up independent of Paris and hostile to Rome was sufficient to render action on the part of the Pope and King of France not only advisable, but necessary.

At length Innocent III, who was fully alive to the dangers which threatened the Church in Languedoc, was roused to action, and in 1198 two Cistercian monks, one of whom was Peter of Castelnau, were sent. Over them was placed Arnold of Amaury, the sincere but fanatical abbot of Citeaux. Though one Fulk, a bigoted monk, replaced the lukewarm Bishop of Toulouse, the mission was a failure, and in 1206 was only saved from retirement from the county by the energy of Dominic de Guzman, the founder of the Dominicans, who resolved to devote his life to the suppression of the Albigensian heresy.

The time for forcible measures had now come, and Rome sided with the semi-barbarous north of France against the civilization of the south. In January, 1208, Peter of Castelnau, who had excommunicated Raymond VI, was murdered, and Innocent III preached a crusade, which assumed the character of an international war, and lasted for twenty years. At the head of the forces of Langue d'Oil, Simon de Montfort invaded Languedoc, and a struggle marked by singular ferocity began.

Raymond bowed before the storm, but his nephew, Raymond Roger of Béziers, made a gallant defence. Béziers was taken by assault and over 15,000 persons slaughtered. At Carcassonne Roger was captured by treachery, and probably poisoned. His territory was given to Simon de Montfort, who as a northerner was bitterly opposed in his efforts to reduce the south to obedience. The struggle became therefore a political one—the south against the north. In spite of this hostility of the people of Languedoc, Simon gradually defeated his foes; Raymond fled to Peter of Aragon, but again took arms.

A second crusade was preached. Peter of Aragon was slain at the battle of Muret, the crowning victory of the crusades, in 1213, and Raymond submitted. Simon de Montfort therefore became Count of Toulouse and Duke of Narbonne, and introduced northern nobles into his territories. Though he gave a small portion of Toulouse to Raymond VII, who also received the imperial marquisate of Provence, under his auspices the civilization of Languedoc was stamped out with the Albigensian heresy.

In this war Thibaut, Count of Champagne, a trouvère, was compelled by his oath to fight against Raymond, though his own words show how bitterly he disapproved of the papal action:

> "Ce est des clers qui ont laisser sermons
> Pour guervoier et pour tuer les gens,
> Jamais en Dieu ne fuit tels homs créans.
> Nostre chief [Innocent III] fait tous les membres dolour."

Then he goes on to declare that

> "Papelars [the followers of the Pope] font li siècle chanceler.
> Ils ont tolu joie et solas et pais,
> Sen porteront en enfer le grant fais."

A reaction soon set in in Toulouse against the north, and Raymond VII, who was as orthodox as Simon, headed it. It was simply a struggle for the political independence of the south. Simon was killed at Toulouse in 1218, and his son Amaury, finding that he could not hold his own against the conquered populations, offered his domains to the King of France, to whose court he fled. Philip refused to accept Amaury's heritage, and died in 1223, leaving his successor, Louis VIII, to establish the royal supremacy in Toulouse. The south had indeed been victorious, but had been so weakened by the long struggle that it proved quite unable to stand against the power of the King of France. The northern invasion, though it had temporarily failed, had in reality attained its object.

In 1226 Louis VIII, in whose favour Amaury had abdicated his rights, recognised that the interests of the Pope coincided with his own, and, being pious and adventurous, continued to war against the south.

Reunited again under the banner of the French king, the forces of the north invaded the lands of the south. Many of the lords and bishops and towns of Languedoc hastened to send in their submission to Louis before the expedition started, and had it not been for the obstinate conduct of the citizens of Avignon, who refused to allow Louis to cross the Rhone, the march would have been merely a triumphal progress. As it was, Louis, having taken Avignon, met with no opposition till he came to Toulouse.

Fatigued with the length of the expedition, the great barons began to complain, sickness broke out in the army, and Louis contented himself with organizing the administration of the country, and returned to Paris. For the first time a royal army under the king had appeared in Languedoc, and the expedition constitutes an important event in the progress towards national unity.

Unfortunately Louis, who had thus opened his reign so auspiciously, died suddenly in 1226.

On his death Raymond VII made the Treaty of Meaux with the Regent Blanche of Castile, yielding to the crown the duchy of Narbonne and all his lands from the Rhone to beyond Carcassonne. He was confirmed in his possession of the county of Toulouse, which, however, on his death was to fall to Alfonse, the king's brother, who was to marry Raymond's daughter. If they had no children the county was to go to the King of France. Alfonse was, further, to raze the walls of thirty of his strong places and of Toulouse itself.

The importance of this treaty is hard to overestimate. The tendency towards the formation of strong monarchies had been felt in the south, where it seemed possible that Toulouse and Provence, representing as they did the national feeling of southern France, might combine and form a kingdom independent of northern France.

The Regent Blanche had definitely removed this danger to France, had at last destroyed the independence of the south, and the royal dominion touched the Mediterranean. Though the papacy set up the inquisition in every diocese and though Dominicans were installed in the new University of Toulouse, no further attempts were made to force on the south the customs of the north, and in Provence even troubadours were to be found.

In 1241 a league was formed against Louis IX; Raymond VII revolted, while his subjects expelled the Dominicans, and Henry III, in 1242, opportunely brought an army with which to retake Poitou. The defeat of the English was followed by the submission of Raymond, and in 1243 the Treaty of Lorris confirmed the Treaty of Meaux.

"A partie de cet époque," writes Guillaume de Nangis, "les barons de France cessèrent de rien entreprendre contre leur roi le Christ du Seigneur, voyant manifestement que la main du Seigneur était avec lui." The failure of the last revolt of Raymond VII brought to an end the reign of feudalism in Languedoc. Raymond indeed attempted to contract a new marriage with Beatrice, heiress of Provence, so as to avoid leaving his domains to Alfonse of Poitiers. But the princess married, in 1245, Charles of Anjou, another brother of Louis IX and Count of Provence, and Languedoc was thus dominated by Capetian influence at the time of Raymond's death in 1247. Toulouse at once became the possession of Alfonse, and thus ended a long series of savage wars which had not only overthrown the independence of the people of the south of France, but had also destroyed a remarkable civilization.

The union of northern and southern France was now irrevocable. The change of rulers brought no disturbance in Toulouse, which submitted quietly to the administrative alterations and new institutions introduced by Alfonse.

In the government of Alfonse the influence of the wisdom and moderation of the king is constantly visible. "For the first time since the best days of the Roman Empire," says one historian, "was the administration of the south carried on in an intelligent manner." Alfonse took a very active personal share in carrying out in his government the principles approved by Louis IX, and the south enjoyed law and order.

In Provence Louis's brother, Charles of Anjou, who had become Count of Provence, lived from 1245–1265. Like Alfonse, he restored order, destroyed feudalism, checked the aspirations of the towns towards independence, and favoured their commercial interests. The troubadours retired to Spain, and northern methods of government succeeded in gradually welding all Provence together.

In 1271, on the death of Alfonse, the county of Toulouse, with that of Poitiers and Auvergne, devolved on his nephew, Philip III; the Provençal lands had already, bit by bit, been incorporated with France.

All fear of the rise of a great national state in southern Gaul which would have included Toulouse and Provence was over, and the vigorous nationality of the *langue d'oil* had conquered, though it had not convinced the south.

During the Hundred Years' War Aquitaine continued in English hands, and it was not till the siege of Orléans in 1430 that the south began to take any important part in the struggle against the invaders. It was not till the Reformation that the south was regarded as an integral part of France. In the French Revolution the south first led the way in opposing the crown, and, later, its independent views had to be crushed by the armies of the north. It always was and still remains a land apart, with its peculiar dialects and customs, while the inhabitants differ widely in appearance and manners from their northern countrymen.

But though the destruction of much of what was most characteristic in the civilization of the south perished, though Gothic tended to replace the Romanesque in such cities as Limoges and Toulouse, though the troubadours fled, and though the suppression of the Albigensian heresy led to the introduction of the Inquisition, it was necessary in the interests of France that the royal power in the thirteenth century should be extended to the Mediterranean.

The great feudatories in days when the monarchy was a mere shadow were valuable centres of local feeling, and proved real securities for order, and indeed for prosperity, if not always for peace.

But feudalism was essentially military, and the feudal barons, though useful warriors, were bad rulers. When, towards the end of the twelfth century, some of these feudal states, like Toulouse, showed a tendency to still further develop the strong local feeling and to set up an authority completely independent of the central power, it was time for the king to intervene. Feudalism in France had at last found masters in such men as Louis VI, Philip Augustus, and Louis IX—and the age of its ascendency was closed. The establishment of the royal power over the length and breadth of France was accomplished; France, now a great state and nation, had under Louis IX assumed the leadership of Europe; it remained for Louis IX and Philip IV to give to France an administrative system adequate to the needs of the time, and to preside over the marvellous intellectual development of France in the thirteenth century.

CHAPTER VII

THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS OF FRANCE IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

The French monarchy had not a few difficulties to contend with in the thirteenth century; it had, however, many sources of strength, and during the reigns of Louis VI and Philip Augustus it had made secure its foundations and consolidated its powers.

No longer the slave of the Church or a mere *primus inter pares* in his relations with the baronial hierarchy, the French king, fortunate in the support of the clergy, the towns, the university, and the city of Paris, stood forth as the real head of a strong monarchy. This revolution in the position of the monarchy was due partly to the policy of Louis VI, but mainly to that of Philip Augustus. He it was who destroyed feudalism as a basis of government, by taking measures to bring a large part of France into real subjection to the king and the law. The local administration, which shortly after the accession of Hugh Capet, was placed under *prévôts*, representatives of the monarchy in the royal domain, had been revolutionized by Philip Augustus by the creation of *baillis* and *seneschals*. In the north of France *baillis* were placed over the *prévôts*, and, like the *missi* of Charles the Great, held assizes and reported to Paris upon the conduct of the *prévôts*. In the south the *seneschals* performed similar duties, but, unlike the *baillis*, who belonged to the rising official class, the *seneschals* were for the most part the great local lords.

By these two methods of administration an important step was taken to concentrate all authority in the hands of the king, and to connect the local and central organization.

At the head of the whole system stood the king, advised by the members of his royal household. These ceased during the reign of Philip Augustus to hold their posts by hereditary right, and gave place to the king's personal friends. During his reign the court of the king, or *curia regis*, was gradually turning into something like a modern law court, composed of knights and clerics. From this court or council of the king sprang the official class, the growth of which was so encouraged by Philip Augustus. Under Louis IX Languedoc was added to the kingdom of France, and he found it necessary to still further develop the system which Philip Augustus had practically established. The regular visits of the *baillis* and *seneschals* to the royal exchequer were continued, and the connection between the local and central bodies was still further strengthened by Louis's institution of *enquesteurs*, who, like the *missi dominici* of Carolingian times and the itinerant justices of Henry II, became from about 1248 a recognised part of the administrative system.

In 1247 Louis held an inquiry into the conduct of the local functionaries, and heard complaints from the inhabitants. At first the *enquesteurs* were chosen almost exclusively from among the Dominicans and Franciscans, though later the members of the secular clergy and knights were employed. Their duty was to watch over the local administration and to repair acts of injustice committed by royal agents.

In 1251 Louis issued a great ordinance which in many points resembled Henry II's inquest of sheriffs. The *baillis* were forbidden to receive bribes, and were compelled to swear on taking office to execute justice fairly and to preserve the rights of the king and those of the people. Various other regulations as to their lives and conduct were laid down.

Before Louis died the king's court had become divided into three bodies, each with its own duties. The Cour du Roi, or the Grand Council, confined itself mainly to administrative and political matters; the judicial business fell to an assembly known as the Parlement; the financial work was taken over by Maîtres des Comptes.

Of these the Conseil was improved by the addition of trained lawyers; appeals from the inferior courts were taken to the Parlements; and the Gens des Comptes, who met in 1249 to consider financial questions, gradually became a permanent body. One of Louis's most important reforms was the renewal of the coinage, resulting in the improvement of trade, which flourished so conspicuously in the *villeneuves* and *villefranches* founded by him in Languedoc.

Coming between Philip Augustus, who placed the royal power on secure foundations, and Philip le Bel, who acted as a despot, the reign of Saint Louis, who always showed a sense of justice and a conscientious regard for his subjects, was regarded as a period of peace, progress, and prosperity. On his death a writer declared: "Je dis que droit est mort, et loyauté éteinte—quand le bon roi

est mort, la créature sainte—a qui se pourront desormais les pauvres gens clamer—quand le bon roi est mort qui tant les sut aimer?"

During Philip III's reign (1270–1285) the Parlement of Paris acquired a still more definite position. Appeals increased, especially from Aquitaine; the procedure of the Parlement was fixed in 1278, and only laymen were allowed to be barristers. The Parlement, too, tended to split up into various courts, each with its own special functions.

The principles adopted by Louis IX in regulating the administration of France were adopted by Philip IV, and similar results were attained. The elimination of the doctrine of tenure from political life, and the increase and development of the royal power, were the aims of both kings. But Philip IV was the real founder of the absolute monarchy in France, for it was he who formally established that administrative system which undermined the local institutions of feudalism.

Owing to the increase of administrative, judicial, and financial work, he still further proceeded on the lines of differentiation laid down in the reigns of Louis IX and Philip III, and defined and stereotyped changes which had already been practically effected. In 1302 the royal court of the Capetian kings was divided clearly into three departments. First, there was the Conseil du Roi, composed of the great officers of the household, fifteen councillors of state, and two or more secretaries. It was concerned with political and administrative business, and advised the king. Though, like the Concilium Ordinarium of Henry III of England, it preserved certain judicial powers, mainly of an appellant character, most of the judicial work was handed over to the Parlement of Paris, the famous law court, which had a continuous existence till the French Revolution. Its beginning was seen in Louis IX's reign, but in the time of Philip IV it became permanently fixed at Paris, and itself experienced the process of differentiation. The Grand Chambre, often called the Parlement, decided all important cases of appeal, and those touching members of the sovereign courts, peers, and royal officers. The Chambre des Enquêtes, prepared appeals from the lower courts for further consideration, and the Chambre des Requêtes decided upon all lesser cases of first instance.

The functions of the Parlement thus corresponded in great measure to those of the King's Bench and Court of Common Pleas, which had been evolved from the Curia Regis. Louis IX often presided over the Parlement; Philips III and IV more rarely. The Parlement at first met twice a year, at Easter and at All Saints, in the Palais de la Cité, known later as the Palais de Justice, but the legal business increased so rapidly that later in the century it became a permanent court.

Unlike the law courts of England, the Parlement was given the duty of registering the royal edicts, and in later centuries the Parlement, declaring that no edict was in force till it had been registered, claimed the political right of remonstrating with the king, and of even vetoing his edicts.

As the Conseil du Roi mainly dealt with political and the Parlement with judicial business, so upon the Chambres des Comptes devolved the financial work of the royal courts. Like the English Exchequer, it had jurisdiction in financial cases. The meeting of the Gens des Comptes in 1269 in the Temple in Paris had shown the necessity for devolving the financial work of the royal court upon a permanent body of capable experts, who could receive and audit the accounts of the *baillis* and *seneschals*. The year 1309 is the usual date accepted for the first regular meeting of the Chambre des Comptes.

The organization of the administrative machinery in Paris as well as in the provinces by Philip IV was an achievement comparable to that performed by Henry II. The machinery worked well in the provinces, and though the relations between the Chambre des Comptes and the Parlement were never satisfactorily adjusted, and led to many conflicts, the general effect of Philip's measures was to give stability to the government and to lighten the burdens of the people.

The same year (1302) which saw the organization of the administrative, judicial, and financial machinery saw also the first meeting of the States-General.

Like Simon de Montfort in England, Philip IV was the first French king who assembled the *bourgeoisie* in a national assembly. They may have been called in 1289, 1290, or 1292, but there is no satisfactory evidence to show that representatives of the towns came together with the nobles and clergy before 1302. That year was a critical one for Philip. He was in the midst of a bitter contest with Boniface VIII, and France had not experienced such a crisis in her history since the accession of Louis IX.

In order to secure the national support in his quarrel with the Pope, Philip called the famous States-General of 1302. Its members were divided into nobles, clergy, and citizens, for the peasants were unrepresented. They sat for one day. There was no discussion, and they unanimously offered the king their support.

Beaumanois, writing just before the accession of Philip, said: " La seule restriction véritable est que tout établissement général doit être fait 'par très grand conseil.' "

The nobles, however, by no means looked upon the States-General as the *restriction* here alluded to. On the contrary, they looked upon the union of the king and *bourgeoisie* as another victory of the royal power, while Philip, who called the States-General together again in 1308, in order to get the Templars condemned, and in 1314, to secure the support of the country against the Flemings, had no intention of founding a constitutional government.

In England the Parliaments of 1265 and 1295 were forced on Henry III and Edward I respectively, and were the result of a union of all classes. In France the meeting of the States-General was simply due to the exigencies of the situation of 1302, and in order that Philip might play off the representatives of the nation against the Pope. The promise of the gradual establishment of constitutional government was never fulfilled. Though the nobles and their estates united in 1314 against Philip's harsh measures, it was only a momentary union.

The French, unlike the English nobility, never cast in their lot with the middle classes, and the system of their estates was not calculated to bring about a union. Summoned the States-General were at intervals during French history, usually, as in 1356 or 1614, when some serious crisis demanded strong and patriotic measures. But once the crisis was over the kings easily regained their power, and long intervals elapsed before the States-General were again summoned.

The steady encroachments upon feudalism, the growth of a strong monarchy and of a highly organized administrative system, and the development of town life had naturally a beneficial influence upon intellectual progress. The tenth century, in which feudalism was supreme, was distinguished by ignorance and barbarism and by secularity in the Church. From that time a steady improvement set in, which, initiated in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, may be said to have culminated in the thirteenth century.

A striking awakening of the human spirit had taken place. Of its many developments the outburst of the crusades and the rise of the universities are the most prominent. During the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries Anselm, Abélard, Bernard, Thomas Aquinas, and Roger Bacon illustrated this revival in speculative activity and scholastic theology, while in art, law, music, and other departments of knowledge the same steady advance was seen. In this revival of learning, which has been called the twelfth-century renaissance, the universities played a leading part. Coincident in point of time with the rush of the feudal nobles to Palestine in the early part of the twelfth century, associations of teachers were busy making Paris a well-known centre for philosophical and theological study. From the time of Abélard's teaching may be dated the elevation of Paris into the leading intellectual centre of Europe, independent of the reputation of any one teacher, and based in great measure on the political and commercial importance of the city as the capital of the Capetian dynasty. The brilliant reign of Philip Augustus, who was the founder of medieval Paris, saw many improvements in the city. He built the Louvre; he paved the streets; he founded markets; he constructed fortifications. Recognised as the capital of France, Paris gained in prestige from the growth of the university, while the university owed its rapid development to the support of the royal power, which had its headquarters in Paris. Between 1200 and 1210 the university first secured written statutes and recognition as a legal corporation, and about the same time the university established its independence of the chancellor of Paris, who hitherto had exercised a general control of education. In its struggle with the chancellor the university was supported by the papacy, and gradually the chancellor lost most of his powers, leaving the masters free to govern the university without fear of external interference.

Philip Augustus, who has the credit of being the founder of the university, exempted it from municipal control, and in Louis IX's reign the faculties were organized and the teaching rights of the masters fully secured.

The wisdom of the royal policy in supporting the university cannot be doubted, and the universities became strong upholders of the monarchic claims. To Philip Augustus was in some measure due the revival of Roman law, which gave a sanction to the royal pretensions. In Paris thinkers were trained who exercised a considerable influence upon politics in after years. In Paris were studied theology, philosophy, medicine, and law, in addition to the old trivium and quadrivium, which consisted of grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, and music.

The university soon became the centre of European learning. It was divided into four nations: (1) French, (2) German, (3) Norman, Picard or Fleming, and (4) English, which included Russians, Poles, and Hungarians, and these four nations held a university meeting once a week. Honorius III distinctly recognised the independent position of the university, and Gregory IX decreed that none of its members could be excommunicated except by the Pope. Thus protected by king and Pope, the university flourished. It supported the crusade against the Albigenses, the union of Normandy with the French crown, and the struggle of the English church and barons for Magna Carta.

Immense were the benefits to education and public opinion in France from the establishment of the University of Paris. In common with the other great universities it was no mere national institution. "It was the home of the Latinized, cosmopolitan, clerkly culture that made the wandering scholar as much at home in a distant city of a foreign land as in the schools of his native town."

In the thirteenth century the relations of the University of Paris to the Church were frequently strained. There had been little danger of any criticism hostile to the Church in the twelfth century, for most of the students were orthodox, and Churchmen were in the ascendant at the university and understood its methods and teaching.

But with the Latin conquest of Constantinople new opportunities for studying Aristotle were given to Western nations, and the question of the reconciliation of philosophy with theology, and of orthodoxy with speculation, stirred the learned world. As the Church became more wealthy and more powerful and engaged, as in the Albigensian crusade, in stamping out heresy, tendencies towards intellectual heresies and free thought appeared in the Paris "schools." The danger to the supremacy of the papacy and to the existing order of society was serious, and when in Paris itself views as heretical and revolutionary as those held by the Albigenses were openly avowed it was evident that a crisis in the history of philosophy and theology had arrived.

From an unexpected quarter the Church found assistance. The Franciscans and Dominicans had already begun their labours, and by 1220 these two mendicant orders had been welcomed by the papacy as valuable allies. Though Dominic died in 1221, and Francis in 1226, their followers carried their teaching into every part of Europe, and numerous other mendicant orders were formed. Contemplation and seclusion were eschewed, and these friars plunged into the great towns and were found wherever men congregated most.

Their preaching was popular, their religious poetry touched the hearts of the masses; they were the confessors of kings like Saint Louis and Edward I; they supported popular rights at the time of the Provisions of Oxford. The friars had in France won back for the Church its hold of the whole world of learning, and had received the support of Saint Louis. In 1202 one of the earliest colleges connected with the university was founded by Robert of Sorbonne, on the left bank of the Seine. Robert became the confessor of Louis, who endowed the new college, which became famous as the Sorbonne, and gave his patronage to the university.

Paris during the thirteenth century attracted to itself the learned of Europe. While France had become the leading country in Western Christendom and the centre of all the European movements, Paris remained the orthodox supporter of the papacy. In other departments of culture besides those of theology and philosophy France held a high place among European countries. The study of civil and canon law was revived in the twelfth century, with results of great importance to both the clergy and laity. To the Church the publication of a text-book on canon law, known as the Decretum, by Gratian, a monk of Bologna, was of immense value. The study of canon law expanded, and the Church found the possession of its own law a necessity in her contests with the Empire—contests which deeply affected every section of the community.

After a time the friars became bishops, cardinals, and even popes, but during the thirteenth century they used their power and position with a proper sense of responsibility. The University of Paris was unable to resist their energy and learning, and the mendicant schools of theology in Paris, with their immense intellectual activity, proved able to cope with the secular masters, who disliked their freedom from all the restraints imposed by the university regulations.

After a long and severe struggle, the mendicant doctors consented, in 1255, to take an oath of obedience to the university statutes, and, supported by Louis IX, their position was established and their influence became paramount. They were the avowed champions of the papal authority and of orthodoxy, and the effects of their teaching in Paris was that philosophy became orthodox, and produced thinkers like Albertius Magnus, Thomas

Aquinas, and Roger Bacon. The papacy too regained its supremacy over the world of thought and learning, and the University of Paris, now rigidly orthodox, became the great defender of the Church and the supporter of medieval theology and medieval methods of thought.

Louis IX, like Philip Augustus, Edward I, and Alfonso of Castile, was, above all things, a lawyer. He struck a blow at the judicial combat and private warfare; he developed the procedure of inquest by witnesses, and he provided a system of appeals. Thus it was that, as has been shown, the Parlement of Paris developed its power and jurisdiction, and the study of Roman law spread in France. As at Paris famous schools of theology were set up, so at Orléans a great school of Roman law flourished. From one of these jurists came the Établissements de St. Louis, which contain among accounts of ancient customs ordinances on duels and on the procedure of the Châtelet, or Paris police court. The thirteenth century was also remarkable in France for the progress of literature and the fine arts. Of historians, Villehardouin and Joinville stand out pre-eminently. The former wrote his account of the conquest of Constantinople in the fourth crusade in a concise style, without commenting on the facts described. He makes no attempt to introduce his personal adventures or to enter into digressions. He goes straight to the point and describes feudal independence. His account stands between the monkish chronicles and modern history, and from the heroic deeds portrayed can almost be called a poem. The author, who was marshal of Champagne, was killed in 1213 by the Bulgarians, having by his writings established himself as the forerunner of Joinville and

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Froissart. But while Joinville's Memoirs might be called *fabliaux*, Villehardouin's history should be termed a *chanson de geste.*

The Champenois Jehan de Joinville, seneschal of Champagne, has left an imperishable description of Louis's expeditions to Egypt in the sixth crusade. "To read him," writes Dean Kitchin, "is like studying one of the fine manuscripts of the same age; each page is adorned with paintings, which in their quaintness and purity of feeling, their clearness of conception and happy grouping, and brilliant freshness of colour display before our eyes the real life of the times." He wrote a hundred years after Villehardouin, and may be said to have invented memoir writing. Full of picturesque details, Joinville's Memoirs illustrate the growth of the royal power, and describe all that was going on in France.

In the twelfth century poetry abounded in France. In the north Arthur and Charlemagne were celebrated in epics; in the south the troubadours sang their lyrics. But the poetry of the thirteenth century suffered terribly from the wars against the Albigenses. The attractive civilization of the south was in great part destroyed and all that was most distinctive in the life of Languedoc perished. The days of chivalry were gone, and the troubadours were no longer heard. The Roman de la Rose, begun by Guillaume de Lorris about 1262 and finished by Jean de Meung about 1305, is the poem most worthy of note in the thirteenth century. In this and in many of the other poetic productions of the time is to be found the spirit of keen satire touching on the abuses in Church or State.

But all kinds of subjects were treated by the poets of the time, from the story of Aucassin and Nicolette to the *chansons de geste* of Jean Bodel and the sermons of Maurice de Sully, Bishop of Paris. History, poetry, sermons, all found a place in the French literature of the thirteenth century. Nor was architecture neglected, and in that matter Paris owes much to Philip Augustus. Under his care " Paris became the first modern capital of a centralized national state." From the school of Cluny had come architects, and the Gothic style made its appearance in France. A number of buildings, including the cathedral of Paris, gre[illegible] to [illegible] in the reign of Philip, and he wisely inclosed the city with a wall which took in the buildings north of the Seine, the cathedral in the island, and the schools on the south of the river. Under Louis IX the most beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture, the Sainte Chapelle, was built, and the arts of sculpture, painting, and music made considerable progress in his reign, which forms the central point of the most brilliant epoch in the middle ages.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR AND ITS RESULT

No sooner had France, like England, developed the essentials of constitutional government in a States-General, in a supreme court of justice of the establishment of courts for financial business and cases of various sorts; no sooner had a period of prosperity apparently set in, than she found herself plunged into a great war which revolutionized her whole system.

From being a country divided into a number of semi-independent provinces as in 987, at the accession of Hugh Capet, France had become at the beginning of the fourteenth century a strong centralized state. The old feudal nobility had been destroyed, the territorial unity of France had been secured, a highly organized administration had been set up. Philip IV had successfully completed the work of his predecesors, and the absolute monarchy with its highly developed administrative system was founded. But the accession of Philip Valois seemed to jeopardize the safety of the edifice which had been slowly built up, and France on more than one occasion threatened to sink beneath the disasters which fell upon her during the reigns of Edward III and Henry V. It was not till after she had undergone a period of suffering, extending roughly from 1337 to 1453, during which the monarchy under John and Charles VI became impotent, that the royal power emerged, and after infinite difficulty and patience again held a position similar to that which it enjoyed under Philip IV.

The causes of this sudden and serious setback, so amazing when the development which was taking place in all departments in the thirteenth century is remembered, are not hard to seek.

In the first place the French kings had created a new royal nobility in the place of the old feudal baronage. Henry I had made his brother Robert Duke of Burgundy, Louis VI had given to one of his sons the county of Dreux, and Philip Augustus had also given to one of his sons the counties of Boulogne, Domfront, Mortain, and Clermont. So far this practice had no serious results, but with Louis VIII a fresh development took place. By his will he assigned Artois to his second son, Robert; Anjou and Maine to his third son, Charles; Poitou and Auvergne to his fourth son. Louis IX gave to his brother the Count of Artois the county of Toulouse, and to his brother Charles Provence, while to his son Robert he gave the county of Clermont.

No doubt this practice of giving appanages to the near relations of the king was a good method of governing conquered territory and of introducing French ideas, language, and administration, but these benefits did not compensate for the dangers which resulted to the monarchy.

The *féodalité apanagée* became as selfish and as unmanageable as the old *féodalité territoriale.* The new nobility were as anxious for independence as the feudal lords had been, and effects similar to those which could be traced to Edward III's family settlement policy were perienced in France.

The rivalry of the Burgundians and Armagnacs and the League of the Public Weal were, like the Wars of the Roses, the result of the mistaken policy of the French and English monarchs.

Philip IV and his successors made a serious mistake in using the third estate to further their own ends, and in not imitating Edward I's policy and educating the middle classes to take a share in the government. The commons saw no means of satisfying aspirations which were natural and legitimate, and after the battle of Poitiers a coalition between them and the nobles was quite possible.

The monarchy found little or no support from the nation during the early stage of the struggle with Edward III, and it was only when the lower orders realized the worthlessness of the nobility that, *faute de mieux*, they rallied round the king toward the end of the Hundred Years' War.

A further cause of the difficulties which beset the monarchy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was the attempt made by the French kings to annex Aquitaine before they had gained full mastery over all the forces of disunion within France. The Hundred Years' War came before France was really prepared for it, and the English kings at once seized upon every opportunity of hampering their opponents at home.

France had to fight for very existence, and the exigencies of the struggle, complicated by a rising something like the Commune of 1870, and by a civil war, necessitated the reassertion of monarchical principles and the develop-
t of a powerful monarchical *régime*. Amid the clash
arms the new royal feudalism was discredited, and

finally overthrown by Louis XI, who reared a despotism on its ruins.

As on many other occasions, France exhibited during this struggle a marvellous power of recovery; rarely, if ever, however, has her recovery been so remarkable, when the character and immensity of her misfortunes during some hundred years is remembered.

Thus, when Philip Valois ascended the throne the progress of the monarchy was already checked by the formation of the new nobility *apanagée* and by the policy adopted toward the States-General. The situation was still further complicated by the English occupation of Aquitaine. On Philip's accession, the English still held Gascony and Guienne, with the districts of the Limousin, Perigord, Quercy, and Saintonge. Philip IV, by his two years' war with Edward I, had clearly warned the English that their possessions in France were held on no firm tenure. It remained for Philip Valois to inaugurate a definite policy and to initiate a series of efforts, which, with slight intermissions, never ceased till the whole of the old duchy of Aquitaine was an essential part of the kingdom of France.

Edward I had realized the impossibility of allowing an independent Wales to exist in the western border of England; Philip and his successors were equally alive to the necessity of expelling the English from the southwest portion of France.

The task was no easy one. Bound to England by commercial ties, the merchants of Bordeaux were alive to the value of their English connection, while the population of Gascony and Guienne, being of different origin to that of northern and central France, and still impregnated with traditions of independence, trembled at the prospect of becoming a part of the French monarchy, and preferred the easy rule of their foreign and distant rulers. Philip could not appeal with effect to any patriotic sentiment among the population of the English provinces, least of all to the inhabitants of Gascony.

Nevertheless the work of unification had to be undertaken, and Philip at the very outset of his reign began a series of petty attacks on the English possessions in France—a policy of " pin pricks " calculated to rouse a monarch of a far less phlegmatic disposition than Edward III.

Had this matter been the only point of contention between the two monarchs; had Edward III been able to concentrate all his efforts on the defence of his provinces, it was likely that, supported as he was by his French-speaking subjects, he could have repelled Philip's efforts with ease. But the talented and tactful French king had already renewed the alliance made by Philip IV with Scotland, and most successfully supported David Bruce against Edward Balliol, Edward III's candidate for the Scottish throne.

To their surprise and dismay, the English Parliament found that it had to provide for a Scottish war, in which France provided the Scots the men and money.

Almost simultaneously with the difficulties in Scotland, the Count of Flanders, at the instigation of Philip, whose vassal he was, arrested the English merchants in his lands, and stopped at one blow the flourishing trade between England and Flanders.

Thus attacked in Scotland, in Flanders, and in southern France by her hereditary foe, England had no other choice, if she wished to preserve her French possessions, than to accept the challenge and defend herself at all points.

The Hundred Years' War, which began in 1337, and was not concluded till 1453, was thus due to the statesmanlike policy of Philip, whose descendant Charles VII saw the final expulsion of the English from those provinces which Henry II's wife, Eleanor of Guienne, had brought her husband.

Philip, it is not to be believed, had any idea of the magnitude of the struggle into which he plunged his country. During his lifetime he had the misfortune to see his enemies win Crécy and take Calais, while his successor, John, still more evilly treated by fortune, not only witnessed the overthrow of a magnificent army at Poitiers, but was forced to sign the Peace of Bretigny, and lived to see the French monarchy endangered by a democratic movement under Étienne Marcel.

Like the Fronde, and the republican government established on the fall of Napoleon III, the States-General, which met after Poitiers, at first proceeded with prudence, and adopted a constitutional attitude and carried out useful reforms. But just as the parliamentary Fronde was succeeded by the new Fronde, and as the Commune for a time took the place of the government of Trochu, Favre, and Gambetta, so Marcel found himself carried away by his extreme followers and hampered by the outbreak of the Jacquerie against the nobles.

As it was, Marcel's attempt to give France a constitutional government is noteworthy as being, with all its faults, the one serious effort before 1789 to found a limited monarchy.

In the end, the excesses of the years 1356–1358 led to a reaction and enabled Charles V to rally round the monarchy all supporters of order, while the new acquisitions made by Edward III in the Treaty of Bretigny, facilitated the eventual conquest by France of all the English lands in the south and west.

The very failures of Philip and John had thus enormously aided Charles V's work of conscientiously carrying out the true national policy of France. The defeats of Crécy and Poitiers had taught the French the defects of their own military system, the uselessness of cavalry, as well as the value of dismounted men at arms; the excesses of the States-General, its inefficiency, and its inability to govern a country when the enemy were at its gates, had made apparent the necessity of a strong central power. The enormous amount, too, of fresh territory wrenched from France had only given Edward a vast number of discontented subjects who would seize the first opportunity of throwing off the English yoke and of returning to their allegiance to the French king.

The national pride existing in these newly ceded provinces soon gave Charles an opportunity of taking the initiative, and, profiting by the illness of Edward III and that of the Prince of Wales, and by the latter's mistakes in his government of Aquitaine, Charles not only rapidly recovered what had been lost at Bretigny, but drove the English from all their possessions, save Bordeaux, Bayonne, and Calais.

In these campaigns, which only continued for some four years, Charles had been greatly assisted by the destruction of the English fleet off Rochelle by the Spaniards and French, and by the failure of John of Gaunt's great march across France—a failure due to the Fabianlike policy pursued by the French, who refused to fight pitched battles, and allowed the hostile army to waste away through disease and starvation.

As soon as the men of Guienne, and even of Gascony, realized that the last bolt of the English was shot, and that communication by sea with England was cut off, they felt the uselessness of fighting for a lost cause; and though historical and sentimental ties no less than trading interests kept the two great seaports of Bordeaux and Bayonne still faithful to the English connection, the rest of the country passed into the hands of the French king. The French may well regard Charles V as one of the founders of the monarchy. Till Louis XI no greater king governed France. Order was kept, despotism was restored, and Charles carried out a number of reforms necessitated by the long period during which France had, with short intermissions, been at war with England.

The accession of the young and feeble Charles VI and the cessation of serious hostilities with England was seized upon by the populace in Paris and Rouen to assert popular rights. But the people had no intelligent leaders with a definite policy, and the great lords were powerful and united.

The strength of the royal and feudal power was seen at the battle of Rosbecque, in 1382, when Philip van Artevelde and the Flemish burghers were overthrown by a French army, this victory being followed by the suppression of all popular aspirations in France and by the temporary triumph of the aristocracy.

The supremacy of the great lords was riveted on France owing to the king's incapacity to rule, due to periodical fits of madness. The rival factions of Burgundy and Orléans made government impossible and reduced France to a pitiable condition of confusion, weakness, and anarchy.

Such was France when Henry V determined, without any sufficient reason, to attack the distracted country. He had his reward, for the war which he set on foot proved the ruin of his own dynasty, disastrous to his country, and led to the revival of the French monarchy from its temporary effacement!

But though his dynasty suffered from the effects of his policy, Henry V condemned France no less than England to forty years of misery, during which the tide of war swept over most of the country north of the Loire.

The union of France brought about by Charles V no longer existed, the countries south of the Loire ceased to show that lively regard for the French crown which they evinced in the period after Bretigny, and even the nobles would not sink their quarrels when invasion was threatened.

The victory of Agincourt over a portion of the French nobility was due to the want of patriotism on the part of a large section of the nobles, headed by the Duke of Burgundy, while the long-continued hold of Henry VI upon a considerable part of the north of France was due to the apathy of Charles VII, the incapacity of his captains, and the selfishness of the feudal magnates. The Treaty of Troyes in 1420, which handed over to the English most of northern France and Paris itself, marks, perhaps, the lowest point touched by the French monarchy.

At length the career of Joan of Arc turned the tide. The English, being defeated, lost confidence in themselves, the Burgundians recognised that Charles VII represented the cause of French independence, and the Congress of Arras, where Philip of Burgundy renounced the English alliance, proved to be a momentous event in French history and the beginning of the definite expulsion of the English from France.

Henceforward the English merely fought against the inevitable, while the French king began steadily to recover not only his territory from the enemy, but also his lost power. Paris was occupied in 1436, and in 1439 the king established a permanent military force and secured a permanent tax for its payment. Thus freed from all necessity of consulting the States-General and armed with a weapon which could be used against the feudal system, Charles VII found himself in a position stronger than that of Charles V in the years succeeding the Treaty of Bretigny.

The English struggled gamely for sixteen years to hold the land round the ever-loyal Bordeaux, as well as Normandy, which the Lancastrians had endeavoured, too late, to completely Anglicize. But the fates were against them. The situation as it existed in Henry V's reign was entirely reversed. France now had a strong king, England a weak one. The French nobles were under control, while the English barons were reducing the shires to an anarchic condition through their quarrels. English foreign policy was in the hands of incapable men, while the aims of the French government were firmly and successfully carried out. In 1453 the victory of France at the battle of Castillon brought the Hundred Years' War to a close.

The period of the Hundred Years' War was a critical time for France. On two occasions—in 1360, at the

Treaty of Bretigny, and in 1420, at the Treaty of Troyes—nearly one half of the kingdom had been handed over to the English, and on the latter occasion an English prince had been accepted as King of France. The country districts suffered as much from robber bands as from the ravages of the English, and the early Valois kings were unable to unite the country against the invader, and at the same time to put down disorder.

The extraordinary lack of patriotism was no doubt one of the principal difficulties with which successive kings had to cope. Robert of Artois and Geoffrey Harcourt from private motives of revenge pressed Edward III to invade France; the Black Prince found the support of his Gascon troops most valuable in defeating his foes at Poitiers, while, throughout the reigns of Philip Valois and John, Charles the Bad was a constant thorn in the side of the royal power. In the reign of Charles VI and the early part of that of Charles VII the alliance of the Duke of Burgundy with England was even still more disastrous; and it was the University of Paris which declared Joan of Arc a witch. It is not too much to say that from one point of view the Hundred Years' War might be called by French historians the Great Civil War. What chance had France to achieve unity when the feeling of patriotism was dead in the breasts of a large portion of the nobles, and when much of southwestern France adhered to the English cause?

The monarchy had found that no hope of safety lay with the nobles. Their military superiority perished before the English archers and artillery in the Hundred Years' War, and with the loss of their military prestige their sense of responsibility was lowered. They ceased to show any realization of the meaning of *noblesse oblige*, assassinations became frequent, and the peasantry suffered unspeakable hardships from their callousness and cruelty. The black death in 1348 added immensely to the horrors of the war. A large portion of the peasantry, pillaged by friend and foe, became robbers, and in 1357, in the Isle of France, and again in Charles VI's reign, in Languedoc, they rose in despair.

The general distress equally affected the towns, which hitherto had been the homes of liberty. The communes, lately so anxious to reduce the power of the upper classes, became forgetful of the advantages of self-government, and owing to the long war bankrupt and full of discord.

Paris, indeed, took a brave attitude under Étienne Marcel, but it suffered after his fall and again in 1382 for its democratic tendencies, while in the struggles of the Burgundians and Armagnacs, and during the English occupation of Henry V and Henry VI, it lost all its ancient political courage.

The revival of France was not to come from the peasants or from the towns. Nor indeed could the Church offer to the distracted country any aid. The influence of the Church on the formation of France had been great, but the residence of the popes at Avignon, followed by the Great Schism, had not tended to check the growth of clerical abuses or to produce a race of ecclesiastical statesmen.

In 1420 the University of Paris, in common with the Parlement, had lost to such an extent their sense of patriotism as to recognise Henry V as king.

During this period, when it seemed that the close of the middle ages would bring with it the end of the

French monarchy, only two institutions showed any real appreciation of their responsibilities or any sense of patriotism. These were the States-General and the monarchy. Of these the States-General had come forward at two critical moments, in 1357 and 1413, and endeavoured to inaugurate drastic reforms. At one time it almost seemed that the States-General might, like the English Parliament, become a recognised and permanent part of the governmental machinery.

But it was not strong enough for the task, and the duty of enforcing union upon France, of destroying the influence of the feudal lords, of inculcating a feeling of patriotism, devolved upon the monarchy under Louis XI.

CHAPTER IX

THE REBUILDING OF THE MONARCHY

France had paid a heavy penalty for the foundation, on the fall of the old feudal nobility, of the *féodalité apanagée.* The new French nobles had shown no realization of their responsibilities or of their duty to their country; they had failed to defend France against Edward III; the civil war between the Burgundians and Armagnacs had left the country an easy prey to the English, and even while Charles VII was busily engaged in driving out his foes a number of the nobles in 1440 formed, with the aid of the dauphin, a conspiracy against the king, called the Praguerie—an allusion to the recent Hussite movement.

The Praguerie, though easily suppressed, was an earnest of what threatened France as soon as the war with England was over, and a warning to all lovers of order to rally round the king in his final suppression of the independence of the new royal nobility.

Of these nobles, Charles, Duke of Orléans, possessed the duchies of Orléans and Valois, the county of Blois, and a part of the county of Soissons. Being himself of a pacific spirit, with literary and poetic tastes, he took no part in the Praguerie, though his illegitimate brother, Dunois, was not so discreet. The next great family was that of Anjou, descended from Louis, brother of Charles V.

René, who was then duke, held Anjou, Maine, and Provence; he laid claim to the duchies of Lorraine and Bar, and he aspired to the possession of Majorca, Naples, and even Hungary. His daughter, Margaret, proved the evil genius of the house of Lancaster; his son, John of Calabria, had, indeed, greater adventures than his sister, but the same bad fortune. Other important houses were those of Alençon and Bourbon, which went back to the thirteenth century, the first holding the counties of Alençon and Perche, the second that of Vendôme, with Forez, Beaujolais, Auvergne, and the Bourbonnais.

In Languedoc were found the houses of Foix, Armagnac, and Albret. All these were apt to be rebellious and inclined to keep alive the feudal spirit, which, produced by war, lived and flourished on war alone. The memories of the Albigensian crusade were perpetuated in the house of Foix; and the remembrance of the civil war was not forgotten by the Count of Armagnac and the Sire d'Albret, who, living far away in Gascony, in the midst of a warlike population, held a position similar to that of the lords marchers on the Welsh frontier.

Of the two remaining great houses, that of Brittany was always ready to assert its independence, while Burgundy under Charles the Bold headed a formidable insurrection against Louis XI, who with immense difficulty succeeded in holding his own.

The possessions of the house of Burgundy about the time of Louis XI's accession give an excellent idea of the territorial influence which had been obtained by one of the new royal feudal nobles, and illustrate the disastrous effects of the policy of founding a *féodalité apanagée*. The origin of the house of Burgundy was as recent as the reign of John, who after the battle of Poitiers gave Burgundy to his fourth son, Philip the Bold. This foolish act of generosity on the part of John was to cost the crown years of trouble and anxiety, for the duchy of Burgundy developed with extraordinary rapidity. In 1384 Philip made a fortunate marriage with the widow of Louis de Mâle, and secured Flanders, Artois, and Franche-Comté.

But it was Philip the Good, son of Philip the Bold, to whom Burgundy owed the greater part of its possessions. In 1421 he bought Namur, and in 1430, on the death of his brother Antony, he became Duke of Brabant and Limburg. Before the year 1440 he was master of the inheritance of Jacqueline of Holland in Hainault, Brabant, Zealand, and Holland. The Treaty of Arras, in 1435, gave him the Somme towns and the counties of Auxerre and Macon. In 1444 he succeeded to the duchy of Luxembourg. In 1469, by an arrangement with Sigismund of Austria, Charles the Bold, son of Philip, obtained Upper Alsace and the Breisgau; in 1473 he inherited Gelderland and Zutphen, and the same year he occupied by force the duchy of Lorraine, though he did not actually conquer it till 1475. His list of titles, quoted by Michelet, are in themselves striking and suggestive: Mr. le Duc de Bourgongne, de Lotrich, de Brabant, de Limburg, et de Luxemburg; Counte de Flandre, d'Artois, et de Bourgongne; Palatin de Hollande, de Zelande, et de Namur; Margrave du Saint Empire; Sire de Friese de Salins et de Malines.

Though war as a rule rallied the nobles round the crown, the advent of peace was always full of danger to the French monarchy. The nobility had been founded in war, and they developed by war. From the end of the English wars, in 1453, to the outbreak of the Italian war, in 1494, all the resources of the governments of Charles VII, of Louis XI, and of the regency of Anne of Beaujeu were tried to the uttermost. During all these years the crown, beset with difficulties, mostly the making of the nobility, gradually won the day, and, supported by the clergy, the *bourgeoisie*, and the judicature, triumphed, and established the royal power on a firm basis. A great work of national, administrative, and economic reorganization and restoration (necessitated by the civil wars between the Burgundians and Armagnacs followed by the English struggle) was accomplished, and by 1494 France, united and strong, was ready for fresh enterprises.

In this work of restoration Charles VII bore his share. In 1435 he won over the Burgundians from their alliance with England; in 1438 he secured the support of the clergy by the pragmatic sanction of Bourges; and he then obtained from the nation extraordinary powers which rendered him and his successors independent of further grants.

In 1439 the States-General, assembled at Orléans, granted the king a permanent standing army and a permanent tax. This action rendered unnecessary future meetings of the States-General, and made the king absolute.

The nobles and clergy, having no reason to court the third estate, devoted their energies to securing exemption from all taxation, and it became a recognised principle that "the clergy paid with their prayers, the nobles with their swords, and the people with their money." The third estate, deserted by the upper classes, naturally looked to the king for protection, and loyally supported him whenever he attacked the clergy or the nobles.

Charles VII from 1439 to 1461 only called one meeting of the States-General, for, as he himself said, "there is no need to assemble the three estates for raising money, and doing so is only an expense to the poor people, who have to pay the expenses of those who come." He had rid France of the presence of the English, he had humiliated the University and Parlement of Paris, he had overthrown the Praguerie, and he was able to leave his kingdom to his son Louis, to be still more completely welded into a united nation.

The struggle between the crown and the nobles which was certain to follow the establishment of peace had been foreshadowed by the "Praguerie," and in 1465 Louis XI, who had succeeded in 1461, found himself confronted by the League of Public Weal, of which the prime mover was Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. Till the latter's death, in 1476, Louis XI was compelled to devote all his efforts to counteract the ability and daring of a most dangerous antagonist.

The Wars of the Roses in England about the same time led to the fortunate suicide of the nobility, and similarly in the League of Public Weal in the designs of Charles the Bold were concentrated the last great effort of the new feudalism against the crown. In this struggle the king had certain advantages. In France the career of Joan of Arc had developed a feeling of nationality which had spread to the south of France. The nobility had also suffered severely in the civil wars and in the English war. At Agincourt some 8,000 had been slain, and the defeat had covered feudalism and the nobles with disgrace.

Charles VII had employed men of the middle class in his council, and with their advice he had united the conquered provinces to the crown and expelled the English from France. The crown by its success became increasingly popular and respected, and having obtained a permanent standing army and permanent taxes, was better prepared for the struggle than the nobles.

In fact, without the aid of princes like the Dukes of Brittany and Burgundy, who were virtually independent sovereigns, what remained of the feudal nobles would have had no chance of opposing the crown successfully.

As it was, the Duke of Burgundy, by a strange series of lucky accidents had become as powerful as many European kings, and a number of circumstances united the duke, the nobles, and the artificial oligarchy of the princes of the blood. The great feudatories no less than the smaller vassals were alarmed at the reforming policy of Louis, the clergy disliked the working of the pragmatic sanction, the University of Paris was alienated by the king's encouragement of the provincial universities, and the Parlement of Paris was aggrieved at the foundation of a Parlement at Bordeaux. From 1464 to 1472 Charles the Bold supported the French princes in their struggle against the supremacy of the crown, and twice invaded France on their behalf. In the first attempt he and the nobles were successful. The indecisive battle of Montlhéry was followed by the Treaty of Conflans, and probably Louis took the wisest course in making peace on almost any terms. The king had been caught unprepared, and his best chance was to watch for opportunities for separating his enemies.

By the terms of the peace, the Duke of Berri received Normandy as a hereditary appanage; the Duke of Burgundy, the Somme towns, which Louis had recovered from Philip the Good, and the counties of Boulogne and Guines; the Duke of Brittany, the counties of Montfort and Étampes; the Duke of Lorraine, the royal rights over Toul and Verdun; the Duke of Bourbon, territorial concessions of the government of Guiennes; the Duke of Nemours, the governments of Paris and of the Isle of France. Others of the confederators received various rewards and concessions.

The royal power had apparently received a blow so crushing that recovery was for many years impossible. Yet the absence of statesmanship, or even of ordinary prudence, on the part of the nobles saved the king, and restored the fortunes of the monarchy.

The nobles merely wished for independence and for small isolated despotisms. Their aims contrast badly with those of the English barons in the thirteenth century.

" The barons of England, in leading the people against the crown, had become an aristocracy, and had laid the foundations of a political organism. The French nobles used their victory differently. They exacted no positive guarantee—none which might be fruitful of further development. The securities they sought were negative. They made the king swear that he would never compel any of them to attend his court and never visit them without warning. All that they aimed at was independence, and they were careless of power which could only be obtained by union and common action. They wished to remain petty sovereigns, rather than to become the leaders of an aristocracy, the members of a petty state." *

When once it was evident that the great nobles were playing for their own hands, and wished simply to secure strong independent principalities, their supporters fell away. The king, who was determined not to acquiesce in defeat, quickly recovered Normandy and appealed to the nation in the States-General of Tours in 1468 for support in his opposition to the nobles. This meeting is a very important one, as indicating the general feeling with regard to appanages, and as illustrating the readiness of the middle classes to delegate all power to the king. The estates declared:

(1) That "nothing under heaven, neither favour, nor brotherly affection, nor the obligation of any promise, nor pretence of gift or provision, nor fear, nor threat of war, nor regard to any temporal danger, ought now or ever to move the king to agree to the separation of that duchy from the crown;"

(2) That "nothing could excuse a vassal who warred against his suzerain."

(3) That the treaty with the Duke of Brittany was wholly damnable, pernicious, fraught with evil consequences, and in no wise to be endured or tolerated.†

Before separating the estates gave the king full leave in their absence to do what he pleased, or, as they put it, "as justice required."

The following year, in his famous interview at Péronne, Louis was forced to promise to give his brother

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* Martin, Hist. de France, vi, p. 571, quoted by Willert in his Louis XI.

† Willert, Reign of Louis XI, p. 124.

Champagne and Brie, but after his return to Paris his fortunes steadily improved. The Duke of Berri accepted Guienne instead of Champagne, and his death, in 1472, enabled Louis to seize Guienne. A new league was indeed formed, and in 1472 Charles the Bold invaded France, but in the interval between the Treaty of Conflans and 1472 Louis's position had grown stronger, and Charles signally failed to unite the French princes against the crown.

From 1472 Louis had nothing to fear from Charles the Bold directly. There was no longer any danger of a union of French princes under the duke's leadership within France. But none the less, for four years more Louis was compelled to watch his great antagonist, who was busy forming schemes which, if successful, would have seriously endangered the advancement of the French monarchy.

Having made a lasting truce with Louis, Charles entered upon the second period of his career, no longer directing his territorial ambition to Picardy and Champagne, but aiming at setting up on the Rhine an independent and compact kingdom. He wished to consolidate his dominions, to secure Lorraine, Provence, and Switzerland. Thus a middle kingdom, something like the ancient kingdom of Lotharingia, would be established, and Charles even hoped to raise himself to the imperial throne. It is not necessary to discuss the possible advantages and disadvantages of the formation of a kingdom stretching along the Rhine.

Whether a kingdom "based on no community of race, of language, of history, of law, of trade, or of personal loyalty," and with an indefensible position, could have held its own for a long period is indeed very doubtful. During the few years devoted by Charles to his schemes of aggrandizement in the Empire France was undoubtedly threatened, for his object was "not to gain a paramount influence within the kingdom of France, not to weaken the French monarchy in the character of one of its vassals, but to throw it into the shade, to dismember, perhaps to conquer it, in the character of a foreign sovereign." *

In 1475 he invaded Lorraine, and the same year his ally, Edward IV, invaded France. But the star of the French monarchy was in the ascendant: Edward IV made the Treaty of Pecquigny and retired; Charles the Bold was slain on January 10, 1477, before Nancy.

During these and the succeeding years Louis had been faithfully served by the sagacious Philip de Commines, who in 1472 had fled from the service of Charles the Bold. Commines did for the language of France what Chaucer did for that of England. His memoirs give an admirable account and criticism of Louis's policy. Commines is one of the first historical writers who is not content with merely chronicling events, but dwells upon their causes and significance.

Like Louis XI, he had no sympathy with democratic views, but his opinions show a breadth and a liberality unexpected in the minister of a despotic king. He realized what would be the end of the career of Charles the Bold, who, he says, was ruined by pride; he also had no illusions as to the evil effect on the monarchy of the action of the States-General at Orléans in 1439.

During Charles the Bold's later years it was much

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* Freeman's Select Essays, Charles the Bold.

debated if Louis ought to have attacked him, and so interfered with the realization of his plans.

"It seemed to some," wrote Commines, "that the king ought not to have prolonged the truce, nor to have suffered the duke's presumption to have waxed so great. . . . There were others who understood the matter better, and whose knowledge was greater, because they had been upon the spot. These advisers urged him to accept the truce without misgiving, and to allow the duke to dash himself against those German countries, whose might and power is such as to be well-nigh incredible; for they said that when the duke had taken one place or ended one war he would at once begin another, . . . and that the king could in no way avenge himself more easily than by leaving him to himself, and that he would even do well to assist him somewhat, and, above all, not to allow him to suspect that the truce might be broken; for it was certain that all his resources would be spent and utterly wasted against the great size and strength of Germany." *

This Machiavellian advice, given, no doubt, by Commines, was excellently suited to the new situation which had been created by the ambition of Charles the Bold, and the advice was fully justified.

With the fall of Charles the Bold the crisis in the reign was over. Louis had already reduced the great feudal nobles to submission. The Duke of Alençon died in 1471, and his son, the Count of Perche, remained a captive till the end of the reign. The Count of Armagnac was killed in 1473, fighting against the king; the Count of

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* Commines, Liv. iv, chap. i.

Saint Pol was beheaded in 1475; and the Duke of Nemours and Count of La Marche and Pardiac, who owned vast estates, was executed the following year for planning a conspiracy against the king. All that remained for Louis was to seize upon as much of Charles's dominions as possible and then to consolidate his power in France. Having annexed the Duchy of Burgundy with the counties of Macon, Auxerre, and Charolais, he was able, by the death of René of Anjou, to unite with France the counties of Maine and Provence. He had already secured Roussillon and Cerdagne and the duchy of Guienne, so, at his death, in 1483, he had not only recovered for the monarchy the position it had held under Philip IV, but had so thoroughly and successfully carried out his policy that Charles VIII, like Henry VIII, was able to launch France upon an adventurous career, and to squander vast sums of money upon his foreign wars.

"He [Louis XI] was," said Commines, "more wise, more liberal, and more virtuous in all things than any contemporary sovereign."

Many of his plans for administrative reform remained uncompleted. "If God had granted him the grace," wrote Commines, "of living five or six years more without being too much weighed down by sickness, he would greatly have benefited his realm." But, with the aid of arbitrary taxation and a standing army, Louis had carried out the popular wish—the strengthening of the royal power.

There was not at that or at any time before 1789 any general desire for a constitutional form of government, though a few, like Commines, might protest against the extension of the royal prerogative.

The nation objected to oppressive taxes, and to the licentious conduct of the companies of ordnance, but not to the increased strength of the monarchy. The unpopularity of the king was due to the weight of taxation, and with time men forgot that he had saved them from anarchy, civil war, and feudal oppression.

Of the great feudal principalities, the only one remaining was Brittany. It was only the fear of driving the duke into an alliance with England that forced Louis reluctantly to make a treaty in 1472 with the duchy. Louis was keenly alive to the necessity of uniting Brittany to France, and before he died he urged the young Duke of Orléans, afterward Louis XII, to be faithful to the dauphin, and not to conclude any secret treaty with Brittany.

Charles VIII had only been on the throne five years before an opportunity of annexing Brittany occurred.

The duke died in 1488, and left his daughter, Anne, heiress to his possessions. The regent, Anne of Beaujeu, was quite alive to the importance of the situation, and the marriage of the young king and Anne of Brittany was at once mooted. Though Henry VII, Ferdinand of Spain, and Maximilian, the Emperor, intervened on her behalf, and though she was even betrothed to Maximilian, the schemes of the French court were successful; on December 19, 1491, Charles VIII married Anne, and Brittany was thus incorporated with France.

France had long wanted to restore the monarchy to its former greatness and to become territorially one; she obtained the realization of her desire under Charles VII, Louis XI, and Charles VIII.

In times of peace, however, the nobility had no *raison d'être*, for war was their only employment. After the annexation of Brittany Charles VIII, like the nobles, was ready for war. He therefore decided to plunge into the maze of Italian politics, and in 1494 he invaded Italy.

CHAPTER X

FRANCE AND THE ITALIAN WARS

THE year 1494 marks the beginning of modern times. In that year Charles VIII invaded Italy, and the drama of modern European politics begins.

Henceforward the principle of the balance of power alone "gives unity to the political plot of modern European history." In the crusades, it is true, various nationalities fought side by side; but the age of the crusades was over, and since their close each nation had been busy carrying out its own development. With the exception of the Hundred Years' War between England and France, great struggles between nationalities had not begun. France and Germany had engaged in no great war, Spain had made no attempt to enter upon distant enterprises, Italy had her own interests to attend to.

But with the close of the fifteenth century the work of preparation was over. Spain was now united under Ferdinand and Isabella; Maximilian the Emperor had not only brought together the Hapsburg dominions, but had by marriages and diplomacy increased the power of the Empire; England under Henry VII was not unwilling to leave her position of isolation; even Sweden was being reconstructed by Gustavus Vasa.

No country, however, was better equipped than

France for the reception of the new influences which, under the name of the Renaissance, were beginning to dominate Europe. In the royal hands was concentrated all the power which was in theory supposed to be shared by feudatories, clergy, the States-General, and the Parlement. No country in Europe could have recovered quicker than did France from her own civil wars and from the long struggle with England; no country could rival her in compactness and concentration; no country could boast of so complete a territorial union, so well-grounded an administrative autocracy. Feudal provinces and dynastic appanages had disappeared, and the goal towards which all the great kings, from Louis VI onward, had been working was now attained.

Charles VIII wished to show the superiority of France in Europe; he asserted rights to the kingdom of Naples; he crossed the Alps, and the new drama was opened. Till the peace of Cateau-Cambrèsis, in 1559, the struggle for Italy continued, with short intervals for rest and preparation for new efforts. The invasion of Italy, however, and the Italian wars speedily developed into a contest of immense magnitude between Francis I and the Emperor Charles V, between France and the Austro-Spanish power; and the issues in this contest became, as the wars continued, complicated by the outbreak of the Reformation, which hurled a fresh apple of discord into Europe.

The Italian wars pure and simple lasted from 1494 to 1518, and included the conquest of Naples by Charles VIII, its loss by Louis XII, the League of Cambrai against Venice, and the Holy League against the French, followed by the expulsion of the latter from Italy and their reinstatement in Milan under Francis I after the battle of Marignano and the Peace of Noyon, in 1516. During these wars the French, as Macchiavelli truly remarked, showed they had little skill in matters of state.

In fact, these Italian wars brought little benefit to France. The domestic government of Louis XII was beneficent to the country, trade flourished, and art reached a high pitch of excellence. Abstention from the Italian wars would have made France the most powerful country in Europe. Unfortunately, Louis continued the bad example set by Charles VIII, and Francis I carried on the same policy, with the result that when in 1519 the election of Charles V to the imperial throne united the Spanish and Hapsburg claims on Italy and rendered war inevitable the French treasury was well-nigh exhausted.

The Italian wars, which increased the financial disorder of France, form an important epoch in European history. The various kingdoms while struggling in Italy became conscious of their national identity and of their relation to the European commonwealth of nations. International law necessarily became an important study, and diplomacy took its modern form. Italy had already in the dark ages preserved for Europe the principles of Roman law, government, and civilization; she now gave to her invaders all that was characteristic of the Renaissance movement—the knowledge of man, of Greek art and literature, the finest examples of the new style of architecture, of painting, and of the spirit of criticism. Italy was then in "the Augustan age of arts and knowledge"; in politics and refinement she had for upward of a century formed a world of her own. During the early Italian wars she monopolized the attention of Europe, and when, after 1518, the centre of interest shifted north of the Alps, she still remained divided and distracted till the days of Cavour.

But though after the accession of Charles V to the imperial throne the main interest of European history is no longer in Italy, it was on Italian questions round which the rivalry of Francis I and Charles V hung.

This rivalry, which extended from the accession of Francis I, in 1515, to the Peace of Cateau-Cambrèsis, in 1559, led to four wars in the reign of Francis, and one war in the reign of Henry II, the dates of which are as follows: (1) 1522–1526; (2) 1527–1529; (3) 1535–1538; (4) 1542–1544; (5) 1552–1559.

During these years the rivalry between France and Germany, between the Latin and the Teutonic races, first appeared, and became one of the main factors in European politics, while simultaneously the momentous issues which were involved in the Reformation movement were deeply affecting the character and course of the wars.

In these wars Francis I and Henry II successfully, though at times with great difficulty, preserved the independence of France against the enormous strength of the Austro-Spanish monarchy.

During the struggle the French kings had the advantage of wielding a highly concentrated power almost wholly vested in their hands and of possessing an organized and native infantry.

But without allies France would have been overmatched, and she was therefore compelled to support the Lutherans abroad, and even to call upon the Turks for assistance. For many years the policy of being Catholic at home and Protestant abroad was pursued by French kings and ministers, while the advantages of a connection, if not an alliance, with Turkey were fully appreciated by Louis XIV, by Fleury, and even by the French Revolutionary government.

In 1559, when the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrèsis brought the long wars, waged nominally over Italy, to a close, France gained the three Lotharingian bishoprics, Metz, Toul, and Verdun, from the Empire, and Calais from England. She had lost Spanish Navarre, and had been forced to relinquish her projects in Italy.

It is difficult to weigh the advantages and disadvantages to Europe of these long wars; it is equally difficult to praise or blame the action of Francis I.

It is true that, with no sense of responsibility, Francis, like a knight-errant, plunged into war with Charles V, and throughout his reign continued to struggle vainly for "the bauble of a kingdom beyond the Alps." On the other hand, it may be said that indirectly Francis was the cause of the failure of Charles V to establish the universal supremacy of the Spanish-Hapsburg monarchy in Europe.

When Charles V abdicated, his projects were only half accomplished, and France had prevented its own dismemberment and secured its own independence.

By the opposition of France and the Austro-Spanish monarchy the establishment of the principle of the balance of power was assured, and the alliance of France with the Turks brought the whole of Europe into closer connection.

Thus it is evident that Europe gained immensely from these wars, which largely contributed to the success of the Reformers in Germany, and it is difficult to see how Protestantism could have escaped suppression at the hands of Charles V if it had not been for the intervention of the French and the Turks.

Francis I and Henry II themselves cared nothing for Protestantism, and during their reigns, with the full approbation of Paris, the Huguenots were cruelly persecuted.

The influence of the early Renaissance movement had been fully appreciated in France, and even Louise of Savoy, the mother of Francis I, agreed with her son in sympathy with "letters against scholasticism, with Erasmus against the monks, with the biblicists against the Sorbonne."

But this early connection of the Renaissance with the Reformation movement was checked by the atrocities of the Anabaptists, the extreme wing of the Reformers in Germany. The cultivated and educated party in France, which wished to introduce learning into the Church and to unite scholarship and knowledge to the splendour and artistic beauty of Catholicism, was scared by the excesses of some of the early Reformers, as they were later alienated by the cold, harsh worship practised in the reformed conventicles.

At first Francis stood between the reforming party in France and the party of reaction, and endeavoured to establish harmony between them. At the head of the reforming movement in France stood the king's sister, Margaret, who, though in no sense a Protestant, included under her protection various sections of reformers, from the humanists and men of education anxious for reforms by gentle means, to the followers of Calvin and the comparatively small number of zealots, who, like Somerset's party in Edward VI's reign, delighted in image-breaking.

But Francis was no statesman, and he and the court merely played with the Reformation movement, and endeavoured to crush it as soon as it ran counter to the feelings of the Parisians and the party of reaction headed by Anne of Montmorency and supported by the Sorbonne.

Francis himself was far more interested in art and literature, which he studiously patronized. A great outburst of Renaissance architecture took place, of which the Louvre is a good example. Italian architects and artists flocked to France, and some of the *châteaux* on the Loire date from this period.

In 1529 the Gargantua of Rabelais appeared, which alone would redeem the literature of the reign from the charge of insignificance if it were not supplemented by the verse of Marot and the political writings of Calvin. Francis, interested in letters, endeavoured to found a great college of France with Erasmus at its head, in opposition to the dull scholasticism of the Sorbonne. But Erasmus would not come, while the king's want of vigour and the strength of the reactionary tendencies checked a project which if carried out might have largely benefited the study of language and of natural science in France.

But though Francis I and the nation at his back had no wish to substitute Protestantism for Catholicism, John Calvin, who was born at Noyon, in Picardy, had very different views. Driven from France in 1534, he published his great work, The Institutes, and in 1536 settled in Geneva, which became the centre for the reformers, and from which issued a system which has affected the religion of half Europe.

This teaching derived much of its strength and influence from its stern, uncompromising antagonism and opposition to Rome. The French Huguenots imbibed their opinions largely from Calvin's teaching, which stands in direct opposition to the views held by Francis I and his court.

Loyola, Rabelais, Calvin—these three men were probably in Paris in 1528, and their names alone are sufficient to explain how impossible it was to expect the Renaissance to effect a *modus vivendi* between the various religious parties in France.

In persecuting the French Protestants during the latter part of his reign Francis was acting in consonance with the wishes of the most powerful section of his subjects. In his weakness and in his strength Francis I typifies the French nation. France during his reign had an opportunity of leading the new intellectual and religious movements of Europe and of improving the administration and the financial condition of the country. But, like their king, the subjects of Francis showed very little real interest in the intellectual movement, and in spite of Rabelais the age is singularly destitute of any great literary achievement; the mass of the French had no sympathy with the desire for a reform in the Church, and they cared little for their own constitutional life. They supported willingly the upholding of the dignity and power of the crown; they were as eager as was Francis to secure a leading position in Europe; they hankered after military successes.

For these the nation willingly made enormous sacrifices. The States-General, rarely summoned, gained no privileges, the bureaucratic system, so deadening to local life and constitutional liberty, steadily grew in importance, taxes increased, the sale of offices became the custom, the corruption of royal officers was in no wise checked. Financial disorders were ever liable in France to lead to discontent, if not to revolutionary movements, and the perpetual mismanagement of the finances was a standing danger to the well-being of the kingdom. When asked by Charles V how much money he took from his subjects, Francis I replied, "As much as I want."

The ever-recurring misfortunes of France, which, in spite of her brilliant successes in the fields of battle and diplomacy, alternate with periods of apparent prosperity, were due to the king's power of levying taxes without the consent of the people and to the existence of a standing army dependent on the king alone.

"These things," said Philip de Commines, "gave a wound to the kingdom which will not soon be healed." Other mistakes in the French system of government were to be found in the continual exemption of the nobility from taxation and in the fiscal burdens falling principally on the peasants, who, though no longer serfs, suffered from the tolls, and fees, and dues which they had to pay the lords, from the tithes paid to the Church, and from the extra burden of the taille, which in the *pays d'état* was a tax on the value of land, in the *pays d'élection* a tax levied on the presumed income from any source, and levied in a most arbitrary way.

In the towns were congregated the middle classes, who grew rich and powerful, while the peasantry became more and more burdened. Nobles, middle class, peasantry had nothing in common, and were practically different castes, between which the gulf was ever widening. Of these classes, the nobles and upper clergy were practically exempt from taxation, as also were royal officials, municipal authorities, and students at the universities. The peasantry bore most of the burdens, imposed owing to the long and expensive wars. France was indeed a compact and centralized state, with the king absolute and uncontrolled, but if the internal condition of the country be examined it will be evident that without reform revolution was inevitable.

Instead of carefully watching over the welfare of the French people, Charles VIII, Louis XII, and Francis I, in order to gratify their desire for aggrandizement and military glory, were led to taking part in invasions of Italy.

On the accession of Charles VIII the peasants made the following complaint to the States-General:

" During the past thirty-four years troops have been ever passing through France and living on the poor people. When the poor man has managed by the sale of the coat on his back, after hard toil, to pay his taille, and hopes he may live out the year on the little he has left, then come fresh troops to his cottage, eating him up. In Normandy multitudes have died of hunger. From want of beasts men and women have to yoke themselves to the carts, and others, fearing that if seen in the daytime they will be seized for not having paid their taille, are compelled to work at night. The king should have pity on his poor people, and relieve them from the said tailles and charges."

The long Italian wars were not calculated to improve the lot of the peasantry, who were more heavily taxed than ever, while throughout the period from 1494 to 1559 the French monarchy was deteriorating, and the likelihood of a serious breakdown increased as the years rolled on.

This danger was intensified by the military spirit which was now created among the smaller nobility, and which, when added to the permanent tendency of the greater barons to make their provincial governments hereditary, indicates some of the dangers which a weak king would have to face in time of peace.

Nor could the monarchy expect much help from the Church.

The concordat of Francis with the Pope had made the Church a part of the monarchy, and the Church had in consequence deteriorated. Non-residence became common, benefices were bought and sold, and the religious condition of France suffered enormously. In the king's hands was the gift of some six hundred benefices, and thus the wealth and dignities of the Gallican Church were bound up with the royal power. Political churchmen henceforward flourished in French history, and till the fall of the monarchy the higher clergy were characterized by subservience to the royal will and a want of sympathy with the mass of the nation, which led to their overthrow at the Revolution.

Even the Parlement of Paris during this age of deterioration lost its character of rectitude. Judicature became corrupt, and those judges who were not bought were affected by their religious passions.

Thus in various ways this period, though seeing the French monarchy apparently at the height of its power, contained the seeds of future difficulties. Europe was in 1559 divided into two hostile religious camps, for even in France Protestantism had gained a firm hold. Nothing had been done to strengthen constitutional life in France; the warlike qualities of the nobles had been encouraged, and civil troubles threatened to ingulf the weakened monarchy.

By the Peace of Cateau-Cambrèsis all the political differences between France and Spain and between France and Germany, all disputes about Italy, and all questions connected with the balance of power were postponed in face of the grave and momentous religious problem, which carried with it questions of political liberty held to be subversive to all monarchical rule.

CHAPTER XI

THE RELIGIOUS WARS

From 1562 to 1598 France was involved in a civil war, which ruined her trade, threw still further back all hope of the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, and strained severely her finances. In spite of the persecutions of Francis I and Henry II, French Protestantism, organized on the Calvinistic model, had grown and become political and aggressive. So numerous were the conversions that the principal reason why Henry II made the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrèsis was in order to deal with this new danger.

At that time the French Protestants or Huguenots numbered about four hundred thousand, composed partly of the smaller nobility and gentry, but mainly of burghers and tradesmen. While in the Cévennes and Dauphiné the peasants supported them, their strength lay principally in the southwest of France, which was essentially Romance. "The main stronghold of the Huguenots may be described as a square inclosed between the Loire, the Saône, and Rhone on the north and east; the Mediterranean, the Pyrenees, and the Bay of Biscay on the south and west; while Dauphiné and Normandy were their outposts." Geneva was, however, the capital of

French Huguenotism, and was practically a French republic.

In the reign of Henry II Huguenotism had then ceased to be merely a religious movement, as it was in the reign of Francis I, and represented social and political disaffection as much as religious opposition to the papal doctrines.

The Genevan system, to which the Huguenots adhered, was admirably suited for aggression and resistance. "Calvin's theology and the institutions in which they are embodied are certainly unlovely, and they are in no small degree also narrow, shallow, and hard. But they are throughout pervaded by an intense faith and an unflinching consistency; and they supplied, perhaps, the only bulwarks able, humanly speaking, to withstand the refluent wave of Romanism which in Calvin's latter days came upon the Reformed churches of the Continent." *

The Counter-Reformation, piloted by the Pope and the Jesuits and supported by Philip II and Henry II, was advancing with rapid strides and taking advantage of the divisions existing among the Protestants. The Reformation had come to a stand in Europe, and many states were falling back. Nowhere was this powerful reaction so successfully confronted as in those parts of Europe where Calvinism had taken root.

"That system gathered up into a definite organized shape the faith, the Church life, the private practice of Protestantism"; it gave forth with no uncertain tone decrees and a system as definite, as peremptory, and as imposing as that of the Romish theologians. What

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* Espin's Critical Essays, p. 230.

gave Calvinism a further hold on the nations was its connection with politics and political institutions.

D'Aubigné describes its influence in the following passage:

"The great movements in the way of law and liberty effected by the people in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have certain relations with the Reformation of Calvin which it is impossible to ignore. As soon as Guy de Brès and many others returned from Geneva to the Low Countries the great contest between the rights of the people and the revolutionary and bloody despotism of Philip II began; heroic struggles took place, and the creation of the United Provinces was their glorious termination. John Knox returned to his native Scotland from Geneva, where he had spent several years; then popery, arbitrary power, and the immorality of a French court made way in that noble country for that enthusiasm for the Gospel, liberty, and holiness which has never failed to kindle the ardent souls of its energetic people. Numberless friends and disciples of Calvin carried away with them every year into France the principles of civil and political liberty, and a fierce struggle began with popery and the despotism of the Valois first, and afterward of the Bourbons."

But D'Aubigné was unable to speak with the same pride and, perhaps, pardonable exaggeration of the results of Calvinism in France as he did with regard to the United Provinces and Scotland. For Calvinism was never more than tolerated by the majority of Frenchmen, and during the religious wars it became apparent that the Huguenots had miscalculated their strength, and in the first war they were indeed only rescued by the decisive action of the crown. From that moment it was clearly proved that Huguenotism could never control the constitutional and religious principles of the French nation. But Calvinism never acquiesced easily in defeat, and till 1598 continued to struggle to win religious and political ascendency in France.

Into this struggle Huguenotism was forced by the policy on the part of the Guises of "subordination of national interests to a desire for religious unity at any price."

The correct and natural policy of France—the policy adopted by Henry IV—was to oppose the Emperor and Philip II of Spain, to allay religious differences in France, and to aid her recovery from the exhaustion caused by the long Italian wars. But, though Duke Francis of Guise, the first man in France since his capture of Calais, favoured the above policy, his brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, persuaded Henry III to make the Peace of Cateau-Cambrèsis in order to join the other Catholic powers of Europe in a crusade against Protestantism.

Henceforward "religious unity at the expense of national dismemberment" became the watchword of the Guises and the Catholic party in France.

Between two parties actuated by fierce religious animosities and antagonism the crown at the beginning of the religious wars was helpless. A strong king was necessary to enforce peace upon the warring religious parties, but, unfortunately, till the accession of Henry IV, France had no strong king. Throughout the wars of religion the crown held a most humiliating position between two parties, each stronger than itself.

During the Italian and Spanish wars the smaller nobility had acquired military tastes, while to the greater nobles war was their only *raison d'être*. To the crown the advent of peace was always the signal for the outbreak of difficulties at home. Strong kings, like Louis XI, boldly faced and overcame the internal troubles which welled forth at the close of the English wars, but after the Peace of Cateau-Cambrèsis France found herself without a man of the capacity of Louis XI. The result was the religious wars, which lasted twenty-six years and rendered France during that period a *quantité négligeable* in Europe.

The task of managing the nobles in time of peace was itself sufficient to strain the resources of a strong government, but after 1559 the religious factor was introduced, and the position of the crown was rendered infinitely more difficult; for before the religious question all feelings of patriotism and loyalty seemed to disappear. The middle classes were divided; the great French bureaucracy could not be relied upon to support the crown; the Huguenots gave Havre to the English; the Guises intrigued with Spain.

Face to face with the religious question, men forgot their own nationality, they lost all sense of the real meaning of their actions, they endangered the independence and very existence of France by their mutual antagonisms.

As time went on the sturdy middle class, which, characterized by industrious habits, a scrupulous honesty, and an unobtrusive manner of life, has always formed the backbone of the nation, saw the necessity for a strong hand to keep faction quiet. For while the objects of the Catholic party or League of Paris became after 1585 antimonarchical, antinational, as well as anti-Protestant, the Huguenots, though loyal to Henry of Navarre, began to aim at securing provincial independence and establishing an *imperium in imperio.*

The struggle between the Catholics and Huguenots, confused as it is in all its details, falls roughly into two periods: (1) 1562–1585 and (2) 1585–1598.

During the first of these two periods the Catholics secured the principal triumphs. The Huguenots, with some reason, were accused of holding republican doctrines, of allying with the foreigner, of opposing the legitimate succession. There is little doubt that at the Conference of Bayonne in June, 1565, the extirpation of Protestantism throughout France was considered, and the struggle against the Huguenots harmonized with the views of Philip II and of the Counter-Reformation movement. In September, 1568, a league for the extirpation of heresy was formed at Toulouse, and called a crusade; while the exultation of Pius V at the death of Condé, in 1569, and his advice to Charles IX to tear up the very fibre of the roots of Protestantism show how anxious the advanced Catholics were for the destruction of the reformed faith.

But it was not the policy of Catherine de' Medici and her sons to carry out such extreme measures. Charles IX had no intention of acting in subservience to Spain, and made the Treaty of Saint Germain in 1570 with the Huguenots. The Catholic reactionists in France at once determined to arrest this tendency to conciliation, and were fortunate in being able to turn Catherine de' Medici's jealousy of Coligny's influence to good account. With the Guises as their leaders, and secure of the unswerving support of the bigoted populace of Paris—the first town in Europe, and the possession of which implied the supremacy over northern and central France—the Catholics struck a telling blow at their adversaries on Saint Bartholomew's Day, 1572.

By this act the bitterness of the religious conflict in France and in Europe was intensified, but the religious policy of the French government did not become strongly Catholic, and continued wavering even after the accession of the shallow and unstable Henry III, in 1574. After various fluctuations of policy Henry III made the Peace of Monsieur with the Huguenots, in 1576, and so enraged the Catholics in Paris and elsewhere that a number of Catholic leagues were founded, aimed at the crown no less than at the Protestants.

In 1585, however, the Guises achieved their greatest success in the formation of the Catholic League or the League of Paris. Henry of Guise, who since 1574 had been the leader of his house, assumed an attitude of antagonism to the crown and, without actually breaking with the upper classes, had begun to look to the populace for support.

He undoubtedly hoped to become king of France in the not far distant future. The country had during these years become entirely disorganized and all classes demoralized. "Men," it was said, "were combating not for the faith, not for Christ, but for command."

The capitulation of Henry III to the League and his assumption of the rôle of a party leader at once brought Henry of Navarre, the great opponent of the Guises, to the front.

Round him gathered the Huguenots, who could claim to be fighting for national independence and the principle of legitimacy. In this struggle Henry III hoped to hold a balance between the Huguenots and the Guises. But after the battle of Coutras, on October 20, 1587, a revolution took place in Paris. Barricades were raised against the king, who was forced to retire to Blois, where he had Henry of Guise murdered.

The union between Guise and the Parisian mob had been of short duration; but the revolutionary movement against the crown was merely stimulated by the murder of its leader, and Paris endeavoured to ignore the monarchy and to rule France by an organization which it had itself created.

Paris had no intention of yielding. The movement there was partly religious, partly political. The suppression of heresy was one of the objects of the League; the exclusion of Navarre and the expulsion of Henry III's favourites were also aimed at.

The religious crisis had brought the movement in Paris to a head, but the political objects of the Parisians soon became paramount, and their action and general attitude remind one of the conduct of the revolutionists in 1789 and the succeeding years.

The city was divided into five districts, and the presidents of these, with an elective council of eleven, formed the Sixteen. This body, by means of trade and other associations, communicated its decisions to its supporters all over France. A definite attempt was thus made to establish by means of a system of terror the supremacy of a central council, with affiliated societies throughout France, and to form a despotism of the most pronounced type.

The attempt is interesting, as in some respects anticipating, though without its justification, the policy pursued by the Committee of Public Safety. But the death of Henry of Guise deprived the League of its only capable leader, and the assassination of Henry III, on July 31, 1589, made Henry of Navarre the legitimate king of France. Opposition to him implied sympathy with the Spaniards and the revolution. France, always in favour of a strong king, soon decided that the monarchy and a revolutionary Paris were incompatible, and that patriotism was to be preferred to the Spanish alliance.

Paris, however, bore the privations of a long and terrible siege before yielding to the inevitable triumph of the monarchy under Henry IV, and was so carried away by fanaticism as to unite closely with the Spaniards.

Though the means adopted by the Parisians to extend their influence through France resemble those used at the time of the French Revolution, the whole attitude of the capital from the time of the formation of the League of Paris, in 1585, compares very unfavourably with that taken up in 1357 and 1792. On both these occasions France was threatened by foreign armies, and on both occasions Paris took a leading part in concerting measures for the defence of France. The government of the Committee of Public Safety, with all its faults, acted, like the States-General under Marcel, for the nation, and was supported by all patriotic Frenchmen in its task of defending France against invasion. But during the period of the League Paris subordinated all feelings of patriotism to those of fanaticism. She called foreign armies into France, and her unpatriotic conduct can only be compared to that of the new or aristocratic Fronde.

Such conduct was bound to react on all who supported it. The accession of Henry IV had created a new situation, and the mistaken policy of Paris was at once revealed.

The patriotism of even the nobles revolted against the Spanish alliance, and they were glad of an opportunity of showing their dislike of the prominent place taken by the third estate. Guise for his own purposes had played with the democracy of Paris and with the rural democracy. Had he lived it is quite possible that a social rising of the lower classes might have taken place, and that the small revolt of the peasants of Normandy against the nobles might have grown into another Jacquerie.

Even if Paris had armed the peasants and given them a capable and determined leader, the nobility no less than the Huguenots would have been exterminated, and the Edict of Nantes would never have been required.

As it was, the nobles, the Church, the upper *bourgeoisie*, and the Parlement of Paris, threatened by the Parisian revolutionists and fearing the democratic tendencies of the League, united together in favour of the crown and the constitution, and averted till 1789 any serious attack on the French monarchy.

Huguenotism was also compelled to execute a similar *volte-face*. In the last days of the degenerate Valois the right of deposition had been preached, and the Huguenot Confederation had assumed an intensely democratic character, but with the death of Henry III the Huguenot party was compelled to advocate the claims of Henry of Navarre and to keep in the background their particularist tendencies.

It only remained for Henry to accept the mass. By renouncing his creed he gained Paris, and with Paris, France.

The League had failed, but Catholicism had won. Democracy was discredited, the spectre of agrarian revolt was laid, and the antimonarchical theory abandoned.

The triumph of the monarchy gave a great impetus to patriotism, for it implied the expulsion of the foreigner and the restoration of the position of France in Europe. Constitutionally France gained nothing. Since the death of Étienne Marcel no notable attempt had been made to give France a constitutional form of government. The French have always preferred good administration to elaborate constitutional machinery, and nothing done by the estates during the religious wars tended to increase the national regard for representative institutions.

The States-General had been frequently summoned during the religious wars, but had completely failed to inspire confidence in their powers or wisdom. Their helplessness before Henry IV provoked no hostile criticism among a people which welcomed absolute rule. The Parlement of Paris had shown weakness during the wars and was discredited, and the Royal Council was incapable of standing against a strong king. The independence of the Church was indeed a possible danger to the monarchy, for an independent Gallican Church implied the predominance of the estates, the revival of the Pragmatic Sanction, the abolition of the Concordat. The situation of 1682, when Louis XIV supported Gallicanism against the papacy and acted in the lines of Henry VIII's ecclesiastical policy, seemed at one time likely to be anticipated.

But Henry IV had no desire to see established in France an independent Gallican Church. He realized that his interests lay in friendship with the papacy. He recalled the Jesuits and, like Napoleon, allied with the papacy, thus rendering himself safe from any opposition on the part of the national Church.

Towards his Protestant subjects he adopted a policy of compromise, which secured their existence, though it failed to satisfy the fanaticism of their opponents. Huguenotism, rugged and unyielding, was by its nature opposed to the absolutism of the crown. But the Huguenot Confederation, with its democratic tendencies, never had a chance of success in a country so monarchical as France. The Edict of Nantes, which Henry hoped would settle the relations between the Huguenots and Catholics, was a treaty giving the Protestants liberty of conscience, eight strong towns, and certain local privileges as to liberty of worship. Huguenotism had failed to establish itself on even an equality with Catholicism, which remained the state religion. It had been driven south of the Loire; it never gained a real hold on the north of France; it was always opposed by the Parlements; its connection with republican doctrines and local independence alienated the upper classes; the deadly enmity of Paris never wavered.

Huguenotism had several elements of weakness which time intensified rather than removed. The Huguenot Confederation, unlike the League, was organized primarily for defence, and was not adapted for winning over its religious opponents. There always, too, existed an opposition between the political and religious elements, between the nobility and the municipal authorities, the union of which had constituted the strength of the Huguenot movement. As years rolled on the aim of the Huguenot towns to form an *imperium in imperio* and to develop republicanism in the heart of monarchical France became a real danger and justified the strong measures taken by Richelieu to end their political existence.

The Huguenots but dimly realized that their privileges were held in "the teeth of the majority of the nation," and that but for the will of a strong king like Henry IV the Treaty of Nantes would never have been made.

Louis XIV, indeed, made a great blunder in revoking that treaty, but at any rate he was carrying out the popular wish when he definitely proscribed the Huguenot religion.

The principle of monarchy, which had been weak at the beginning of the war, was under Henry IV again strong. Other classes had weakened, but the crown had strengthened its position. It had outlived the struggles between the Catholics and the Huguenots; it was again the symbol of French unity against the foreigner; it alone could give the country peace.

CHAPTER XII

THE TRIUMPH OF CENTRALIZATION UNDER RICHELIEU AND MAZARIN

UNDER Louis VI, Philip Augustus, Louis IX, and Philip IV the Capetian house had gradually broken down feudal anarchy, replacing it by a strong monarchy based on a uniform administration. But during the reigns of the early Valois kings the French monarchy, owing to the long war with England, was shaken to its foundations, and no sooner had the English been expelled from France than it was found that the system of giving appanages to members of the royal family had produced a new race of nobles as eager for independence as the old feudal barons. The efforts of Louis XI, the precursor of Richelieu, were successful in dissipating this formidable danger, and the ruin of Charles the Bold's schemes, followed soon after by the annexation of Brittany, again raised the royal power to a position of undisputed supremacy.

But again the centralizing process was checked—first, by the Italian wars; secondly, by the religious troubles in France, during which both the Huguenots and the Catholic nobles aimed at local aristocratic government.

Fortunately the divisions between the Protestants and the Catholics enabled Henry IV to check these attempts to annihilate the power of the crown and to effect a compromise between the two warring religions. France, wearied with the long period of disorder, welcomed his accession as securing the country against the ambition of the Spanish monarchy and against the anti-national and retrograde policy of the Catholic nobles on the one hand, and the advanced Huguenots on the other.

Once seated on the throne and supported by both Catholics and Protestants, Henry bent all his efforts to enabling his minister Sully to reform the finances and to erect a vast confederacy of Protestant nations for the purpose of resisting the progress of the Counter-Reformation, which, under the leadership of the Austro-Spanish princes, was rapidly advancing.

Henry's sudden death in 1610 cut short all his vast projects, and it was not till between 1650 and 1670 that his intentions were mainly carried out. Richelieu and Mazarin destroyed once and forever the last hope of the nobles to establish in the provinces governments which should be perpetual and hereditary, Colbert restored the finances, and the peace of the Pyrenees, in 1659, following on that of Westphalia, in 1648, completed the destruction of the retrograde and unprogressive schemes of the Austro-Spanish house.

Owing to the exigencies of his position, Henry IV had been compelled to return to a modification of the appanage policy of earlier kings, and to intrust powerful nobles with the government of the great provinces. He had also systematized the sale of offices, which since the reign of Louis XII had been used by successive kings for the purpose of filling the treasury. By the institution of the *paulette*, on the payment of which the members of the central courts and the Parlement of Paris became the absolute proprietors of their offices, the Parlement became a corporation of hereditary lawyers.

Henry IV's death was immediately followed by a feudal reaction and a minority. Sully's fiscal reforms were checked, the nobles at once became supreme in the Government, and all idea of opposing the Austro-Spanish reactionary policy was set aside. While the great nobles rejoiced at the opportunity of setting up hereditary governments in the provinces and controlling the monarchy, the Huguenots endeavoured to secure political powers which would have resulted in the creation of a federation of Protestant cities in France—an *imperium in imperio*—which must have proved a constant source of disaffection and disunion in France.

The Parlement of Paris was not behindhand in its pretensions, and the monarchy from 1610 to 1624 was sensibly weakened. With regard to foreign affairs, the policy of Henry IV was dropped, the vast issues which were at stake in Europe were disregarded, and France became a mere cipher among the great nations.

From this position the patriotic efforts of Richelieu rescued her, and by a firm policy at home and vigorous action abroad checked internal disorder and restored the reputation of France in Europe.

The immense value of this work has often been attacked on the ground that France, owing to his administration, lost all chance of setting up a constitutional government, and drifted onward through despotism to revolution. But an examination of the interval from 1610 to 1624—i. e., from the death of Henry IV to the final accession of the cardinal to power—will show at once how groundless such charges are. During those years the nobles seemed likely to convert France into a Poland, owing to their want of patriotism and intelligence. "This aristocracy," writes Henri Martin, "had no aristocratic spirit; their dream was to dismember, not to govern France; their idea was a return to feudalism."

Their exclusiveness and ignorance of the most rudimentary principles of government were clearly brought out during the meeting of the States-General in 1614, when one of the speakers of the third estate remarked that the three orders were all sons of one mother—France—and that the nobles should regard the *tiers état* as younger brothers, and not despise them. The nobles were furious; days were wasted in discussing the matter, and the intervention of the clergy was required to appease the insulted nobility.

France during these years of noble influence and royal weakness naturally fell into a state of anarchy, and it is hard to see what better alternative there was than the strong though arbitrary government of Richelieu.

The history of Richelieu's life is the history of France and of Europe. While he was successfully checking the revival of the Hapsburg supremacy and laying down the principles of French foreign policy, which were to be doggedly followed till the diplomatic revolution of 1756, he was at the same time erecting an administrative system and establishing an absolutism, both of which lasted till the Revolution.

The Richelieu tradition in the foreign, the colonial, and the domestic policy of France was as potent a fact as was the Revolutionary and Napoleonic traditions of later times.

During the whole of his great ministry, from 1624 to 1642, the Thirty Years' War was raging. Spain and Austria, united by family ties and religious aspirations, aimed at recovering for Roman Catholicism the whole of Europe. The Thirty Years' War was the final effort of the Counter-Reformation. For a time the Hapsburgs, aided by the genius of Wallenstein and the folly of James I of England, carried all before them. Germany lay helpless at their feet; France was threatened on her eastern frontier by the extension of Spanish influence from Italy to the Netherlands.

In the interests of the balance of power, and indeed of the future of France, it was absolutely necessary that the triumphs of the Austro-Spanish house should be checked. There was no time to be lost. Already Spain and the Empire were tightening their hold upon Italy, and by an alliance with the Grison league, which held the Valtelline Valley from Como to the Tyrol, were strengthening their lines of communication between Germany and Italy.

By 1626 Richelieu succeeded in forcing Spain to abandon all claim to control the Valtelline. In 1630 he still further hampered the Hapsburg scheme by capturing Pinerolo and preventing the loss of Casale. At the same time, by allying with Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden and by intriguing with the Catholic League against Wallenstein, he helped to save the Protestant cause in Germany while he deprived the Emperor of his best general. After the death of the Swedish king France plunged into the European war, which became a duel between the houses of Hapsburg and Bourbon. In spite of temporary reverses, Richelieu's successes from 1638 to 1642 were extraordinary. He conquered Alsace, he allied with the Dutch, who in 1639 almost completely annihilated the

Spanish fleet, he drove the Spaniards out of Piedmont, he aided Portugal to recover her independence, and he supported the Catalans. He united Artois to the French crown and captured Brisach. When he died he bequeathed to France the policy of abasing the house of Hapsburg on every opportunity, and as a means to that end he definitely organized a system of alliance with Sweden, Poland, and Turkey. Throughout the whole of Louis XIV's long reign his foreign policy was carefully adhered to, and though the alliance with Austria in 1756 suspended the antagonism between the Hapsburgs and Bourbons for some thirty-six years, the policy of Richelieu was returned to by the Revolutionists with renewed vigour.

While he had raised France to greatness and carried out fully and systematically the ideas of Henry IV, he had been equally successful in his colonial policy and in his administrative reforms.

His colonial policy was marked by vigour and foresight. The first attempt was made to occupy Madagascar, French settlements in the West Indies were established, and the restoration by the English of Quebec and Nova Scotia to Canada was brought about.

Henceforward French colonial enterprise was to a great extent centred round the West Indies and Canada. Richelieu's policy was continued and developed, and it was not till the Seven Years' War that France was compelled to yield Canada to England and to curtail her colonial ambitions.

In his domestic policy he had no less the interests of his country at heart. In dealing with the Church, the Huguenots, the nobles, and the official classes he was determined to enforce the authority and the solidarity of the state.

A great revival of religion followed the close of the religious wars in France, which showed itself in various ways. Numerous associations were formed for the education of the clergy, many orders and organizations were established for carrying out the work of charitable relief, and secular instruction was given with success by the Jesuits. The names of Saint François de Sales and Saint Vincent de Paul indicate the general character of a movement which had undoubtedly beneficial results.

This religious revival was accompanied by a natural and inevitable tendency on the part of a large portion of the clergy towards ultramontanism. The Church wished to shake off the control of the state, to assert its own independence, to unite itself more closely with Rome. Such tendencies were forcibly checked by Richelieu. Like Henry VIII of England and Louis XIV, the cardinal, with his keen appreciation of the national interests of France, had no intention of allowing the papal influence in France to increase. Nor, on the other hand, would he permit Gallicanism to assert its independence of the crown.

Richelieu's Church policy was essentially national. Foreign influences were reduced to a minimum, and the control of the state was strengthened; but his treaty with the Huguenots after the fall of La Rochelle roused the indignation of the Roman Catholics. Henry IV's policy of compromise had entailed upon Richelieu serious trouble with the Huguenots, who shortly after he became minister endeavoured to enforce their claim to political independence. The fall of La Rochelle, however, left them with liberty of religious worship, but without the power of opposing municipal rights to the royal despotism. Mazarin continued his policy of wise moderation towards the Protestants, who, till his death, in 1661, were protected from the intolerance of their fellow-countrymen.

The fall of La Rochelle removed a serious obstacle to the power of the monarchy. But the attempted revival of military feudalism, due to the hereditary character of the provincial governments, was a far greater obstacle. "The power of the French nobles rested," it has been said, "mainly upon a triple basis: (1) their strongly fortified castles, each of which required a separate siege for its reduction; (2) their contempt for ordinary jurisdiction, and their claim to settle their own disputes by what had once been their recognised right—private war; (3) the power which they exercised in the provinces through their positions as governors." * These nobles were practically free from all taxation, they monopolized all appointments in the army and navy, they ground down the peasants on their estates, forced them to pay heavy dues and tolls, and, what was worse, they showed during Louis XIII's reign a spirit of factious disloyalty. There were nineteen noble governors of provinces when Richelieu became first minister; at his death there were only four. In the place of the fifteen who had been removed he substituted intendants. They were permanent officials, usually lawyers, and were the agents of the government, and chosen from the middle classes.

The appointment of these intendants, who resembled the modern prefects of departments, not only dealt a telling blow at the political power of the nobles and at the

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* Richelieu, by R. Lodge, p. 161.

spurious feudalism which they had attempted to set up, but proved an important step in the direction of centralization.

Another step in the same direction was the destruction of the numerous feudal castles. In 1626, by one of the Assemblies of Notables which Richelieu at times called, an edict was issued that all castles not necessary for frontier defence should be destroyed, and that no fortification of private houses was to be allowed. Though noble plots against him and the king's government were frequent, Richelieu persevered in his wise course and overthrew the conspiracies, in which the Condés, the Montmorencys, the Épernons, and the Soissons took part. By their lack of statesmanship and patriotism, by their want of sympathy with the other classes in France, by the absence of political morality among them, the nobles had thoroughly deserved their fate.

It would have been better if he had abolished their privileges as well as their independence. As it was; the nobles remained a privileged body till the Revolution, which to a great extent was caused by the cleavage existing between the nobles and the middle and lower classes,—a cleavage which Richelieu might have closed.

At any rate, by destroying the political power of the nobles and leaving them their privileges he prepared the way for the Revolutionists and for Napoleon.

Equally drastic was Richelieu's policy to the representative institutions which still existed in the *pays d'états*, *viz.*, in Languedoc, Dauphiné, Provence, Burgundy, Brittany, and Normandy.

The estates were either destroyed or deprived of much of their independence, while the powers given to the intendants aided the policy of the government in strengthening its connection with and control over all the provinces, whether *pays d'états* or *pays d'élection*.

These measures obviously increased the work of the central government, and the Conseil du Roi or Royal Council was carefully reorganized, and by means of its division into a number of sections—Conseil des Finances; Conseil des Parties, for judicial work; Conseil des Dépêches, for foreign affairs—was able to cope with the great increase of administrative and other business.

All opposition to this centralized and administrative system was consistently suppressed. The nobles having been deprived of their political powers, the political pretensions of the Parlement of Paris remained. But in 1641 an edict forbade the Parlement to take any cognizance of affairs of state on its own initiative, and this policy of Richelieu was followed by Louis XIV. The States-General were never summoned.

The administrative system which Richelieu founded on the ruins of noble and provincial liberties continued till the Revolution. It has been often asserted that France, in the States-General, the Parlement of Paris, and the provincial estates possessed all the germs of a constitution of government, and that Richelieu should have encouraged the growth of parliamentary institutions.

But while in England a union of classes had as early as the thirteenth century opposed the crown, in France the nobles and third estate never attempted to form any league for their mutual interest. The States-General therefore proved a constitutional failure from its first meeting in 1302. The third estate was powerless against the nobles and clergy, and each class struggled for its own interests. The meeting of the States-General in 1614 fully exemplified the impotence and uselessness of that institution.

It was too late to rouse in the nobles and higher clergy a desire to work with the third estate for the benefit of France, and Richelieu recognised the impossibility of utilizing the States-General in building up the monarchy. Equally impossible was it to trust the Parlement of Paris with political powers. That self-elected body of lawyers now formed a close bureaucracy, impregnated with narrow views and class privileges. Though in the absence of the States-General the Parlement often voiced the popular discontent, it had no popular sympathies; being a corporation of judges, it had nothing in common with the English Parliament, which it often aspired to imitate.

Only in the *pays d'états* were there to be found the real elements of constitutional life. But in the seventeenth century it is more than doubtful, the noble selfishness being so widespread and the cleavage between classes so marked, whether Richelieu under any circumstances could have shaken himself free from the traditions of the past and developed a constitutional form of government.

From her geographical position France is always specially liable to invasion from her eastern and northeastern frontiers. Having no natural defences against attacks from the side of Flanders and Germany, a strong government has always been a necessity. Moreover, the whole course of her history encouraged the growth of monarchical institutions. The Hundred Years' War with England, the long struggle with Charles V, threw into the background constitutional aspirations and rallied all Frenchmen round the central power. The religious wars had a similar effect, and during Richelieu's ministry the Thirty Years' War engrossed the attention of France and rendered the triumph of the monarchy certain.

On his death, in December, 1643, France was still at war with Spain and Austria, but the victory of his administrative system was assured. He had founded the French Academy, he had depressed the nobles and Huguenots, he had freed the monarchy from all effective restraints on its power. In the words of Henri Martin, he had "given birth to the two great enemies whose struggle was to fill the modern world—absolutism and the press."

The minority of Louis XIV, like the minority of Louis XIII, witnessed a struggle on the part of the nobles to regain their power. Richelieu, like Frederick the Great, had during his life concentrated all authority in his own hands. All the threads of the administration were controlled by him, and, with the exception of diplomacy, he left behind him no colleague or subordinate capable of taking the initiative. Like the Austrian Council, he was in the habit of directing the operations of the generals in the field from Paris. He surrounded himself with agents and clerks with no special capacity, but who commended themselves to him by their obedience and trustworthiness.

The immediate result of his death, of the easy-going character of the queen regent, and of the want of firmness on the part of Mazarin was that the nobles and Parlement of Paris, ignoring the necessity of concentrating all efforts in the struggle with Austria and Spain, endeavoured to overthrow Mazarin and to abolish the office of First Minister.

For some ten years France was filled with the attempts of the nobles to establish themselves as feudal princes in their separate provinces, to sweep away the intendants, and, in a word, to destroy the administrative system of Richelieu. Their efforts, however, proved unavailing. Abroad the Peace of Westphalia secured Europe from the supremacy of the Austro-Spanish house and preserved the balance of power, while at home, in spite of the two insurrections known as the First and Second Fronde, the work of Richelieu survived and the monarchy triumphed.

In the First Fronde the Parlement of Paris had endeavoured to check the wasteful administration and the ruinous system of taxation. Reforms were indeed necessary, especially in matters of finance. But the Parlement was not a body fitted to carry out such reforms. It had no right to take the place of the States-General; it was in no sense representative of the nation. Many of its members opposed Mazarin because he wished to deprive them of their hereditary right to their offices.

If the official aristocracy were incapable of inaugurating and carrying out a great scheme of reform, the feudal aristocracy showed itself still more impotent and factious.

The Second Fronde, which was dominated by the nobles, was simply a long struggle for governments and pensions. The movement has no tinge of constitutionalism.

Neither the official classes, who were prominent in the First Fronde, nor the aristocracy, which dominated the Second Fronde, were capable of giving France a government suited to her needs. Mazarin's work was to curb Paris and to stamp out the remaining elements of disaffection in the provinces. He was aided in his efforts by the disloyal conduct of Condé and many of the nobles, who allied with Spain and aided her forces to invade France.

Time after time the French nobles had shown a lack of patriotism which ruined their prospects of following in the steps of the English aristocracy. During the religious wars in France the League had allied with Philip II; during Louis XIII's minority it had overthrown Henry IV's national policy and returned to its Spanish leanings; and now, when France, exhausted after her long struggle in the Thirty Years' War, was holding her own with difficulty, the nobles joined the enemy.

By the end of 1653 Mazarin had triumphed and the opposition was crushed. The Parlement of Paris was forbidden to interfere in political or financial matters; Paris supported the king; in the southwest of France, with Bordeaux as its centre, disaffection was crushed. The promptness and resource of Mazarin were successful, and Richelieu's work, for a time interrupted, was carried out. The Treaties of Westphalia and the Pyrenees placed France in the foremost rank among the nations of Europe; the suppression of the Fronde rendered the absolutism of the monarchy secure.

The goal to which the French monarchy had been steadily advancing since the accession of Hugh Capet was now reached, and Louis XIV could say with truth, " L'état, c'est moi."

CHAPTER XIII

FRANCE AND A WORLD EMPIRE

From 1660 to 1715 France was not only the most prominent of the nations of Europe; she was also the most enterprising. Not satisfied with the acquisition of a leading position in Western Christendom, Louis XIV and his ministers endeavoured to extend the influence and supremacy of France to the uttermost ends of the earth. North America, India, Madagascar, Africa, Siam, were all scenes of French activity.

Into these ambitious schemes the nation at first entered with enthusiasm. It was weary of the incessant quarrels and jealousies of the nobles, it was sick to death of civil wars and noble factions. It therefore hailed with enthusiasm the assertion by Louis XIV, in 1661, of his determination to rule as well as to reign.

All the great questions which had disturbed previous French kings and ministers were now settled. The *noblesse* had for centuries been tried in the balance, and had been found wanting. They had failed to display the prudence, patriotism, and ability of the British aristocracy and had lost all influence.

They were destined to decline still further in popular esteem till the fatal days of the emigration, when, fly-ing before the Revolution, they sealed the fate of nobility in France.

Partly in consequence of the policy of the nobles, it was generally accepted in 1661 that France, in spite of her successful wars, her great wealth, the patriotism of her people, and the ability of her ministers, was unable to establish a constitutional government based upon popular representation.

The inability of France to develop any satisfactory political organization was due to a lack of unity and homogeneity. The whole history of the French monarchy from Hugh Capet to Richelieu had been that of the gradual extension of the royal and the reduction of the feudal power. The existence of a number of isolated and estranged provinces had enabled the kings to work upon local jealousies and to defeat all possibility of hostile combinations. No sympathy had existed between the various provinces. The Burgundians did not care what happened to the Normans, nor did the Poitevins trouble themselves about the fate of the men of Provence. The towns showed no tendency to ally with the nobles in checking the assumptions of the crown, which was thus able to defeat in detail any province or town which showed signs of independent action.

The creation of suitable checks to royal despotism gradually became more and more impossible, and when during the minority of Louis XIII France was on the verge of falling into fragments owing to the absence of any political organization the royal power can hardly be blamed for taking drastic measures to make the recurrence of such a state of things impossible in the future.

The nobles, superseded in the provinces by the intendants and shorn of much of their military power by Louvois, were attracted to Versailles, where they received pensions and lived an idle life. The Parlement of Paris was no longer allowed to arrogate political functions, the States-General had failed to make its utility recognised, and the nation came to expect everything from the monarchy, which, under Louis XIV, became absolute and centralized. Few kings have worked harder or more regularly than did Louis XIV. Convinced of his responsibilities as a ruler no less than of the divine character of royalty, Louis was resolved to be the head not only of the government, but of every department of national enterprise, whether literary, ecclesiastical, commercial, or social. From him alone was to emanate all authority, and he was to be the mainspring of every new development in French life. No sooner was Mazarin dead than he began to organize a bureaucratic system of government, which, in some respects, was a model for Europe. The Council of State was under the king the supreme executive and judicial authority, and split into various departments, of which the Conseil des Dépêches and the Conseil des Finances were the principal. But from the middle of Louis's reign these councils became obsolete, and in the contrôleur-général was centred all the financial administration.

Aided by his thirty intendants, the contrôleur practically governed France. Such an administration was always in danger of being corrupt and tyrannical, and it became so in the later years of Louis's reign. But during the years immediately following Mazarin's death the administration on the whole worked well. In Colbert and Louvois Louis had, undoubtedly, able, energetic ministers, who were able to carry out his plans and to second his efforts to establish French predominance in Europe, and to found an empire in the east and west. In the domain of letters the supremacy of France was at any rate unquestioned. The conquests of the French and the prestige of Louis's reign contributed to make "the age of Louis XIV" the Augustan age of French literature. Boileau, the prince of critics, insisted, like Pope, on correctness of style and severity of form, and during Louis's reign the influence of classicism was supreme.

"Classicism," writes Professor Elton, "means Cicero working on the preachers, Plautus and Terence on the comedians, Horace on Boileau, Virgil on Fénelon, Tacitus on the makers of memoirs." * All departments of literature came into prominence, and all were influenced by the French king, "the embodiment of the most despotic of all social governments."

The eloquence and finish so characteristic of French writings between 1661 and 1715 is as apparent in French tragedy and comedy as it is in the works of Fénelon or in the sermons of the great French preachers. Of these the most distinguished were Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Massillon, and Fléchier. Owing to the establishment of despotism in France and the stifling of political discussions French oratory was forced to develop on pulpit, legal, or academical lines. Of these types of eloquence, that of pulpit oratory was most favoured by Louis XIV, and during his reign Bossuet produced the chief masterpieces of religious discourses. France for some years enjoyed internal peace, and a great impulse was thus given to literary efforts, especially when they received the full approval of the king.

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* The Augustan Age, by Oliver Elton, p. 6.

The reign therefore saw the production of sermons which rank among the finest existing, in point of grandeur, correctness of language, and eloquence. In this, as in other departments of literature and art, the supremacy of France was unquestioned, and Louis's reign furnished models of the most correct types of every species of poetry and prose. The domination of French over the European world of letters was assured, and continued long after Louis's death.

Over the domain of letters as over the governmental system the king presided. Similarly he insisted on controlling the Church and resisting the claims of the papacy to interfere with the Gallican clergy. The Church throughout the century was active in literary and educational matters and showed considerable missionary vigour. The growth of Jansenism and the foundation of Port Royal had led to the publication of Pascal's Provincial Letters against the Jesuits, and it was very necessary in the interests of France that her king should show a breadth of judgment and a tolerant spirit in dealing with the many-sided activities of the religious bodies settled in France.

For success abroad and in India and America all discontent at home should have been assuaged. The position was a difficult one, especially for a king like Louis, with strong views on Church matters. Till 1685, when he revoked the Edict of Nantes, no serious step was taken calculated to disturb the relations of the religious dissidents to the crown or to cause a rift between the Jesuits and Jansenists.

It was during this early period of his reign that all Louis's schemes prospered. Thus, when the French language, philosophy, and ideas were permeating Europe, when French literature was exhibiting its marvellous powers, when the great king's political influence in Europe was daily increasing, it was only to be expected that attempts should be made to establish French supremacy in America and India.

Supreme on land, and to a great extent on sea, the French monarchy from 1661 to 1700 seemed irresistible. With the growth of its power the aims of Louis XIV developed. Vast schemes of conquest floated across his brain. France, at the head of Catholic Europe, should, he hoped, become the mother of a great French empire and practically mistress of the world.

Till 1700 the carrying out of his colonial schemes, the extension of the French frontier to the Scheldt and Rhine, and the recognition of his position as head and protector of the Catholic Church occupied the attention of Louis; after 1700 he devoted his energies to securing the Spanish empire for his grandson in face of the opposition of Europe.

While Louis was extending the influence of France in the East and West and laying the foundations of an empire which was destined never to rise above those foundations, he was equally busy in maturing plans for the transference of the imperial dignity from the weak hands of the Hapsburgs to those of the Bourbons.

He hoped to be the supreme head of Christendom, and already certain writers had contended that the kings of France as the descendants of Charles the Great had the right of jurisdiction over Germany. The dread of Turkish ascendency in Europe prompted many men to desire the establishment of a strong empire capable of protecting Christendom. Of such an empire Louis XIV was the only possible head. Louis himself was willing and anxious to secure the imperial dignity. He was king of the most compact and perhaps the richest country in Europe, a country peopled by men who expected glorious deeds from their young sovereign.

Louis therefore, impelled by his own convictions and supported by a united nation, looked forward to the time when he should assume that supremacy in Europe held by the house of Hapsburg since the fifteenth century. Having become Emperor, he would then be recognised as the head of Christendom, the defender and supporter of the Catholic states and Catholicism.

While, however, he was busy forming these vast projects he was not unmindful of the necessity of taking immediate steps to carry out his policy. It was necessary to keep the Emperor weak, and at the same time to strengthen the French northeastern frontier. Alliances with Sweden, Poland, and Turkey were therefore always kept in mind, it being obvious that friendship with these countries would hamper the Hapsburgs in the event of war between them and the French king.

The successful execution of such a policy would reduce the Emperor to a position of inferiority to the great French monarch; it would insure the subjection of the German princes and the permanent superiority of the French nation. The weakness of Spain, the divisions in Germany, the return of the Stuarts to England at the Restoration, all contributed to make resistance to the French schemes useless. Till 1688 Europe was in real danger of falling into a state of political subservience to the mighty French monarchy.

If in Europe Louis's schemes were calculated to destroy that balance of power which Francis I, Henry IV, and Richelieu had upheld, his projects in North America and India were fraught with consequences of serious import to the future inhabitants of the Eastern and Western Hemispheres. During his reign it seemed quite within the range of possibility that the Latin race would become supreme in North America and Canada, while in India the efforts of Martin seemed not unlikely to result in the stable foundation of a French empire. The struggle for supremacy in North America and India between the Latin and Teutonic nations was just beginning, and it is undoubtedly true that the French got a considerable start of the English.

Had Louis been able to establish the French domination in Europe, had he averted the opposition of his opponents and succeeded in preventing the formation of European coalitions against his power, the settlements in America and India would have expanded without serious hindrance, and their destruction in the eighteenth century would have been a matter of greater difficulty than it was.

The attempt to establish a colonial empire seemed at first likely to be successful. Under Colbert France definitely entered into competition for the acquisition of the greater part of North America. In colonizing America France took the lead of her rival, England. Francis I as early as 1523 had sent an expedition to the northern seaboard, and not many years later Jacques Cartier sailed from Saint Malo, and in September, 1535, cast anchor in the Saint Lawrence. After a voyage of many days he founded Montreal, raised a fort at Quebec, and declared the regions of the Saint Lawrence and its streams annexed to the crown of France by conquest. This attempt at a settlement, however, soon disappeared, as did a Huguenot colony planted in 1564 on the coast of Florida. It was not till after the Peace of Vervins and during the subsequent national revival that French statesmen again looked to the West, and, after a colony planted by De Monts had been destroyed in 1613 by an English attack from Virginia, Samuel Champlain succeeded in making effective the hitherto somewhat shadowy claims of France upon Acadia, as the region round Nova Scotia was called. To his energy is probably due the French possession of Canada. Over and over again he crossed to France to get aid; he pleaded the cause of his little struggling colony in the States-General of 1614; he defended it against the attacks of the Indian tribes.

Richelieu undoubtedly wished to counteract the enormous transmarine possessions of Spain and to prevent any further extension of the hold of the Spanish king upon non-Christian peoples. He therefore handed the colony over to a trading company and supported New France in true despotic fashion. A central government was set up in Quebec, nobles were invited to accept grants of land, episcopacy and religious orders were established, and colonists were tempted by bounties to emigrate. But no system of colonization so artificially fostered can flourish; the colonists, fettered by feudal tenures and ecclesiastical supervision, had little inducement to devote themselves to agriculture; they were weakened by attacks of the Iroquois, and never numbered more than four thousand during the first half of the seventeenth century.

Louis XIV and Colbert, however, made strenuous attempts to improve the severe feudal system of Richelieu and to remedy the lack of comprehension shown by Mazarin of the vital importance of the "oceanic policy of the age." It must be allowed, however, that the Italian cardinal had realized that the peopling of new lands in America was valuable as a balance against Spain. The Thirty Years' War was over and a fairly tranquil period had set in in Europe. Colbert's energy was rewarded. The Iroquois were defeated and driven back, and the frontiers having been cleared Colbert then inaugurated a policy more in accordance with the industrial character of the epoch.

The monopolizing company established by Richelieu was dissolved, and trade with New France was declared open to all Frenchmen, with a few exceptions. In 1664 were launched the two companies of the East and West Indies. While all lawful measures were taken to encourage free emigration, forcible means were also adopted to compel peasants to settle across the sea. Immense sums were spent in public buildings, in making roads, in constructing forts, and in aiding the farmers and traders to achieve success in their respective callings.

At first all went well. While France was rapidly forcing her way to a position of supremacy in Europe New France advanced along the path of prosperity. Trade flourished, the population increased, and by the end of the century numbered at least twelve thousand persons.

About 1674 the French West India Company broke down, and henceforward the North American colonies were governed as a province of the French kingdom, and in Canada was reproduced that centralized system under which Normandy and other French provinces were governed.

Like everything in which Louis XIV took an interest, the attempt to foster colonization in New France had a certain grandeur combined with a breadth of conception and a lavish generosity which produced for a time considerable results. Like the stately edifices which rose in Quebec, the foundations of the French power in Canada seemed fixed on strong and lasting foundations. French valour showed itself to advantage in the frequent contests with the natives, while the genius of the French race in assimilating inferior races had many opportunities of exhibiting itself. In this quality, so peculiar to their nation, and in the exploring skill and enterprise of which such men as La Salle gave evidence, the French easily surpassed their English rivals. Before the century closed France, with some show of reason, had claimed as her own the immense basin of the Mississippi—a claim which, if successfully established, would have confined the English to the eastern coast of North America.

In the East France made a similar bid for empire. The advantages to the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the English from their trade with India had not escaped the eye of Colbert, who in 1664 formed the French East India Company to trade with the East. While the French West India Company was formed on the lines laid down by Richelieu—to conquer and convert the heathen—the East India Company rather resembled the English and Dutch companies, and was a chartered body with special privileges and a large capital. Attempts to found French establishments in Madagascar having ended in partial failure, the French established a factory at Surat, in 1668. After many difficulties and some disasters a French settlement was founded at Pondicherry, which, of the various places in India occupied by the French, became the most flourishing. There François Martin, to whose enterprise the French company owed the existence of this settlement, built fortifications, established a trade, and gained the confidence of the people and neighbouring princes. In spite of the capture of Pondicherry by the Dutch in 1693 and the apparent failure of the French to settle on the Coromandel coast, the French cause in India was by no means lost. In 1697 the Treaty of Ryswick closed the war waged by France against England and Holland, and one of the articles stipulated for the restoration of Pondicherry to the French.

In 1706 Martin died, having, of all men, done the most to build on solid foundations a French India. Louis XIV's ambitious attempts to convert the Siamese to Roman Catholicism and to control the destinies of Siam had indeed failed, but Martin's policy of cultivating friendly relations with the natives in India seemed likely to be attended with most advantageous results to France.

In Europe the aims of the French government continued in full harmony with those of their officials or agents in North America and India. Louis XIV had every intention of securing, if not the complete supremacy of the sea, at any rate full domination over the Mediterranean. One result of the carrying out of either of the famous Spanish partition treaties would have been to convert the Mediterranean into a French lake—a result which was as ardently desired by Louis XIV as it was later by Napoleon.

Throughout the greater portion of Louis's reign the attempts to establish the predominance of French ideas, of French culture, of the French language, and, indeed, of the French race in Europe and Asia and North America were marked by certain characteristics peculiar to the French monarchy in the seventeenth century. Underlying all the efforts of Louis XIV to advance French influence was zeal for the propagation of Christianity. The religious idea was dominant in France in the seventeenth century, and its influence was seen in colonial as much as in other matters.

Richelieu's companies were under Church and State patronage, and aimed at not only the exploration of new lands, but also the conversion of the inhabitants. Wherever possible, the Catholic faith was established to the exclusion of other religions. Even under Mazarin the peopling of new lands in America by French Catholics in the interests of religion continued. Supported by the Court and the upper classes, who subscribed largely towards the propagation of the true faith, and by the Jesuits, who were sent to North America in large numbers by Richelieu, the French settlements acquired a very different complexion from that which distinguished those of England and Holland.

Under Louis XIV and Colbert French colonization continued and developed the same features. In spite of the mistrust shown by the French mercantile community for the religious and propagandist element in the expeditions so energetically promoted by the government, ministerial supervision combined with spiritual direction continued to affect the policy of the various trading companies. In North America, Madagascar, India, and Siam conquest and conversion went hand in hand.

Another feature in Louis's colonial policy, differentiating it from that followed by England, was that the French, not satisfied with aiming at the extension of trade, attempted not only to convert the people, but also to conquer territory.

English adventurers received no commission from their government to interfere with the religion or government of any lands with which they traded. The French state, however, issued a plain mandate to French companies to extend French laws and civic rights to the people of any countries they might occupy.

Thus throughout Louis's schemes for the establishment of a world-wide empire royal and ministerial supervision were everywhere apparent, together with an ardent desire to advance the interests of the Catholic Church. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes illustrates this policy, and is an expression of the king's sincere desire to banish from his realm all religious dissidents; while the determined, though futile, efforts of French missionaries at the same period to convert the Siamese illustrates the policy followed in the distant settlements of France.

The dream of a world-wide empire was a magnificent one, but from the formation of the League of Augsburg, in 1686, and the English Revolution, in 1688, it was apparent that its realization was impossible.

Nevertheless, though the Spanish Succession War reduced France to exhaustion, and the Peace of Utrecht checked her colonial and commercial expansion, the years between 1713 and 1756 witnessed a series of remarkable efforts on the part of individual Frenchmen to establish on a firm basis the French supremacy in India, while in North America a well-conceived policy was followed of cutting off the English expansion inland by means of a chain of forts.

But with Louis XIV's death all hope of founding an empire on the lines laid down by the great king and his ministers in reality departed. The French nation, however, quick to apprehend the drift of the policy of Louis, has, while condemning in round terms his despotism, realized that in his aims on the Continent and over seas he represented what was dearest to most Frenchmen. The Revolutionists and Napoleon carried out in part, or in whole, the objects of Louis's European policy, and it was only lack of ships and the superiority of the English at sea that prevented the continuance and development of Louis's transmarine policy.

France never again had such an opportunity as she had in the reign of Louis XIV for not only firmly imposing her supremacy upon Europe, but also for establishing a world-wide empire.

CHAPTER XIV

FAILURE IN NORTH AMERICA AND INDIA

THOUGH all hopes of the establishment of the supremacy of France in Europe disappeared with the Treaty of Utrecht, the ruin of French colonization was delayed for some thirty or forty years.

The rivalry of the French and English in North America indeed steadily increased during the first half of the eighteenth century, and after the failure of Law's schemes the French people, like their government, took little interest in Indian affairs. But during the thirty years of peace which succeeded the Spanish Succession War France enjoyed considerable commercial prosperity. With such pacific ministers in office as Fleury in France, Walpole in England, Patiño in Spain, and Horn in Sweden, Europe remained on the whole peaceful till the outbreak of the Polish Succession War in 1733. It was not till 1740, when France and England plunged into the Austrian Succession War, that the weakness of the French government revealed itself, and after some fifteen years of open or latent hostility French colonization suffered an irretrievable blow and French prestige in Europe was sensibly lessened.

Louis XV and his ministers showed indeed no lack of energy in dealing with the colonies. Re-enforcements of men and money were sent, though irregularly, and the king took great interest in the welfare of his transmarine possessions.

But, as events showed, the most benevolent intentions were worthless unless accompanied by a wise administration, a sagacious foreign policy, and the possession of a strong fleet.

Though the French government certainly cannot be accused of ignorance or indifference in dealing with its Indian or Canadian possessions, it remains true that the colonial policy of France was marred from the outset by fatal defects, which led to the overwhelming discomfiture of the carefully laid schemes of Richelieu, Colbert, and Louis XIV for the establishment of a colonial empire. The difference between the methods and ideas embodied in the colonial systems of England and France are in themselves sufficient to account for the demolition of the edifice which had been so laboriously built up during more than a hundred years by the French monarchy.

After the Spanish Succession War had ended with the loss of Newfoundland and Acadia, the English territory had been brought near to the banks of the St. Lawrence. But these losses were not by any means fatal to the French hold on North America, and during the early years of Louis XV's reign Canada made distinct progress under a vigorous attempt to bring prosperity to New France. By the middle of the eighteenth century Louisburg had been built, Quebec was the centre of a strong garrison, and some fifty thousand French people had settled in Canada.

But, though outwardly flourishing, the old evils continued, and though France possessed in Canada and North America the semblance of an empire, the real elements of permanent power and stability were wanting. While the

British colonists resented the interference of the home government and sought for and obtained wider liberties than they could have hoped for in England, the French colonists were ever under a paternal administration, and found that the *régime* under which they lived was more severe than that experienced by their countrymen in France. The existence of feudal tenures was not calculated to encourage the peasantry to develop the resources of the country; while the continuance of the influence of the Church, the symbol of authority, was far too great and did not conduce to the progress of agriculture. The colonies needed civil and religious liberty, the overthrow of commercial monopolies, and the lessening of the power of the religious orders. There was no inducement for the colonists to till the land, and the population to a great extent turned its attention to trading in furs, to the exploration of new territories and to opening out the far West. In spite of these drawbacks the French were not foes who could be despised. The Indians, gradually forced westward by the pushing Anglo-Saxons, allied with the French, who during the years preceding the Seven Years' War definitely adopted the scheme which had been first advocated in Louis XIV's reign,—of occupying the vast territory between the Mississippi and the Alleghany range, and of connecting Quebec and New Orleans by a chain of forts. But these plans for an extensive dominion, while in themselves magnificent, only bring out the more clearly the weakness of the French system. The English colonists, enjoying religious equality and independence, had formed along the seacoast free autonomous settlements, closely connected and gradually expanding inland. Occupying no weak outlying posts, but satisfied with the possession of lands capable of cultivation and easily defensible, the English colonial population increased in numbers and steadily extended their territories. Thus at the beginning of the Seven Years' War "the power of feudalism and despotic government armed and organized, and with barbarian support, but without really lasting resources, came menacingly in contact with the power of freedom, of wealth and commerce, and of self-rule, ill regulated and peaceful, but full of energy, in the depths of the North American continent."

In spite of the gallant efforts of Montcalm, the capture of Quebec by Wolfe's forces led to the transference to England of the possessions of France around the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes. These lands and the countries beyond have remained ever since in the hands of men of the English race.

Like Sarsfield in Ireland, Pontiac, the Indian chief, made one last despairing effort to support the fortunes of the doomed Indian race. His struggles against the Anglo-Saxon colonists were unavailing, and simultaneously with the close of the history of the French in America ended the last serious struggle of the Indians against their inevitable fate.

Between feudalism and despotic government on the one hand and freedom and progress on the other the issue could not long be doubtful.

Though England lost her control over her American colonies, she still divides with them the dominion of the North American continent, and the only traces in America of the extent and failure of French ambition are to be found in a few outlying places and in one district of Canada.

At the time that the immense colonial empire of France on the American continent was being destroyed the hopes of the French in India were similarly shattered.

But in India conditions prevailed very different from those to be found in Canada. On the American continent there were many French colonists full of patriotism and attached to the cause of their own country; in India there were trading settlements which Dupleix wished to develop into a great empire. His ruling idea was to expel the English from the Coromandel coast and to establish European ascendency " by a combination of martial enterprise and subsidiary relations with native rulers, and based partly on direct titular and territorial acquisitions from the Mogul or his deputies, partly on the indirect influence of the resources of Western civilization."

His political conceptions were marked by startling originality and boldness, his energy and perseverance were extraordinary, his ability in politics, warfare, and commercial affairs was undoubted, and a study of his career leaves the impression that in Dupleix France had produced a great statesman.

Before 1741, however, when Dupleix became governor of Pondicherry, La Bourdonnais, the governor of the Isle of France, had realized the necessity for a strong French fleet in Indian waters, and the French government had considered his project for destroying all the English factories in the East Indies. Without a fleet, however, the efforts of Dupleix were foredoomed to failure. His plans did, indeed, meet with some apparent success due to his remarkable diplomatic skill, courage, and pertinacity, and in 1751 it seemed that French influence would be supreme in southern India.

Two events decided the issues between the English and French. Of these the rise of Robert Clive was the first, and the second was the recall of Dupleix in 1754 by the French East India Company, the directors of which, realizing that Dupleix's policy was involving the company in heavy debt, did not approve of his schemes of territorial aggrandizement.

With Dupleix all chance of any successful French settlements in India was thus sacrificed to the short-sighted policy of a trading company backed up by the government, which feared a rupture with England.

It only required the defeat at Wandewash to complete the ruin of the French hopes in India. The English, with a firm hold on Bengal, and provided with a strong fleet, had proved able to deprive France of her last possessions in India and to free themselves from all serious European competition in the East.

The loss of Canada and the failure in India, though partly the result of certain inherent defects in the French system of colonization, were mainly due to the want of a strong navy and to the entanglements of France in the quarrels of central Europe.

Richelieu, Mazarin, and Louis XIV had all bent their energies to checking the power of the Hapsburgs, and, in order to achieve their purpose, alliances with Sweden, Poland, and Turkey had been organized. But after Louis XIV's death the rise of Russia called for a modification of the French system of alliances. Though Sweden, Poland, and Turkey were visibly decaying, French statesmen refused to alter their policy. Russia was forced into an alliance with Austria, and on the death of Charles VI and the seizure of Silesia by Frederick the Great France threw herself into the Austrian Succession War.

No greater blunder could have been made. The Hapsburgs had ceased to be formidable to France, and in the interests of the balance of power ought to have been supported by Louis XV. Besides, French colonial interests demanded the full attention of the government.

The rivalry between France and England in America and India had entered upon its final stage, and the only hope of French success lay in the creation of a strong navy and the withdrawal from expensive enterprises in central Europe. Though Napoleon might say that Fontenoy was worth forty years to the monarchy, it remains incontestable that France played into the hands of England and Prussia during the Austrian Succession War. At its close she had the satisfaction of having aided in the establishment of Prussia as a first-class power, and of having weakened enormously her ability to hold her own in India and Canada. The elevation of Prussia, a power destined to seriously damage French prestige in Europe, and the resignation to England of the leading place in colonial and maritime enterprise proved a heavy price to pay for adhering to an obsolete foreign policy.

The final disaster did not, however, come till the Seven Years' War, when France, by taking a considerable part in the struggle in Europe, threw away her last chance of defending Canada and her settlements in India against the English. If she played the game of Prussia in the Austrian Succession War, she certainly played that of Austria in the Seven Years' War.

Entangled in the contest between Austria and Prussia, France, with a weak navy, with disorganized finances, and with an army led by incompetent officers, was completely overmatched in India and Canada by the energy and skill of Pitt.

In 1763, at the Peace of Paris, ended an episode in French history which derives its main interest from the ability which men like Richelieu, Colbert, La Salle, Dupleix, and Montcalm showed in the development of a colonial policy and in the defence of the settlements of France across the sea. The idea of a world-wide empire and of transmarine conquest as conceived by Richelieu, Colbert, and Louis XIV was a grand one, and, as the French were ahead of other nations in exploring North America and early appreciated the value of the East Indian trade, there was no ostensible reason to suppose that the carefully laid plans for colonial development should not have succeeded. In breadth of view and in vigour of execution no exception could be taken to the projects or enterprises of the French government in the seventeenth century.

As it turned out, it might have been better for France if Louis XIV had followed the advice of Leibnitz, and, seizing Cairo, north Africa, and Constantinople, had erected a French empire on the shores of the Mediterranean, and thus controlled the main avenues of Asiatic commerce.

After the Peace of Utrecht England found her two principal rivals in the colonies and India, the French and the Dutch, crippled and without powerful navies. Rapidly the supremacy of the sea fell into the hands of England, whose fleet proved supreme on many critical occasions to those of her rivals.

India, it has truly been said, was lost to the French by

Hawke's victory at Quiberon Bay. Though in a somewhat feeble way Louis XV and his ministers endeavoured to encourage commercial enterprise, drastic measures such as Vauban had suggested in 1699 were necessary if France was to hold her own against England on the sea and in Canada and India. Vauban had advised the abolition of the endowments of religious orders in North America, the destruction of privileged companies, and the systematic regulation of emigration.

Commercial privilege, religious bigotry, and royal despotism were telling their tale before the seventeenth century closed. It only required such wars of ambition as those of the Spanish Succession, the Austrian Succession, together with the Seven Years' War, to destroy all hopes of the establishment of a colonial empire. Instead of devoting the energies of his country to the policy of expansion beyond sea and to the development of the navy, Louis XIV in his later years allowed his attention to be drawn away from the colonies by his vast schemes of territorial aggrandizement, and when Louis XV allowed himself to undertake expensive campaigns in Germany, while England was attacking the French in Canada and India only one result could follow.

The French government from 1740 to 1763 undertook an impossible task, and its failure not only destroyed for one hundred and fifty years all hope of the successful carrying out of a colonial policy by France, but also seriously weakened the position and prestige of the monarchy at a time when revolutionary ideas were in the air.

CHAPTER XV

THE SHADOW OF THE REVOLUTION

THE Seven Years' War was a serious blow to the military reputation of France. Rosbach, said Napoleon, ruined the monarchy. At the close of the war the French had lost their dominion in the East and West, and what settlements they had in the West Indies and elsewhere were weak and scattered. Voltaire, indeed, declared that the loss of Canada was a distinct gain to France, and " deplored the shedding of blood to provide coffee or snuff for rich men in Paris or London." Montesquieu had taken a similar line, on the ground that emigration weakened the mother country by depopulating it, and Rousseau opposed the colonial system because it involved the extermination of the noble savage. Behind all these various criticisms lay a bitter opposition to the ecclesiastical influences which had been so powerful in Canada and India.

Louis XIV had especially insisted on the work of conversion and colonization going on simultaneously; he had also reproduced as far as possible a feudal system in Canada. The colonial governors undoubtedly had been hampered by the priests, and the attacks on the religious orders were fully justified.

The loss of their possessions in India and Canada, the result of a faulty system of colonization, which was unable to develop and become self-supporting, and of the fatal error in becoming entangled in the quarrels of the powers of central Europe, was seriously felt by the French nation, and Choiseul endeavoured to remedy these disasters.

He practically recreated the navy, he held closely to the Spanish alliance, and his successor, Vergennes, had the satisfaction of contributing largely to the independence of the American colonies. But the effort involved in taking a momentary vengeance on England cost France dearly, and only hastened the advent of what is known as the French Revolution.

The history of the French Revolution is the history of the transformation of feudal institutions into those of a modern state; it is an account of a series of events which destroyed the French monarchy, and endeavoured to replace it by a constitutional government based on the sovereignty of the people. Though France possessed a constitution, it had long ceased to work, and the sovereign had been for centuries omnipotent. "All evils," wrote Turgot, "arise from the absence in France of a constitution."

Since 1614 no States-General had been summoned, and the personal absolutism of Louis XIV had been followed by the absolutism of the court under Louis XV and Louis XVI. In every country in Europe reforms were sadly needed, but no country required them with more reason than did France. In the years preceding the Revolution the idea of the most advanced of the Continental reformers was to use the absolute power for the benefit of mankind; not to increase men's freedom, but to constrain them to follow the right path. The English Constitution was despised, and everything was hoped for from enlightened despots.

These ideas of reform were to be carried out all over Europe without regard for the boundaries of states or the peculiarities of the sacred nationalities.

Lessing had declared that he did not understand what was meant by the love of one's country, and Schiller was even more emphatic when he said: "I write as a citizen of the world; I early exchanged the narrow boundaries of my own country for the vast world." All over Europe there was a movement in favour of enlightenment, reform, and progress, and in Germany especially the numerous semi-independent princes were prepared to advance the well-being of their subjects. The outbreak of the French Revolution roused the hopes and attracted the sympathies of many Germans. But the effect of the spread of French revolutionary doctrines strengthened in Germany the feeling of nationality and increased the attachments of its people for their language, literature, and history.

It was far otherwise in France. There the revolutionary spirit produced a break with the past, and one of the main principles of the revolutionists was contempt for all their previous history. The Germans throughout the revolutionary period preserved their religious traditions, made no attempt to establish equality, and held firmly to their ancient customs. The French Revolution, on the contrary, was from the first stamped with an anti-Christian character, and always aimed at a levelling of ranks. Irreligion extended to all classes, and M. Sorel says truly that "the French despised their government and detested their clergy, hated their *noblesse*, and rebelled against the laws." Such a condition of feeling demanded a strong ruler. Cardinal Richelieu declared that the French are " capable of anything, provided that those who command them are capable of directing them." Unfortunately, at the time of the Revolution Louis XVI was of all men most incapable of dealing with a difficult situation. The French monarchy in the past had been given enormous powers to enable it to defend France from foreign invasion. But neither Louis XV nor Louis XVI realized that with the death of Louis XIV royalty had entered upon its decline, and that a wise policy could alone save France from revolution.

Louis XIV had fully understood the importance of constant activity and watchfulness on the part of a ruler. " Nothing," he said, " is more dangerous than a king who generally sleeps, but wakes up from time to time." Under capable successors his system might have avoided shipwreck if it had not been for the building of Versailles. By it the monarchy was irretrievably ruined. At Versailles the nobility assembled, and there were usually to be found as many as sixty thousand persons, who were mostly courtiers, and incapable of furthering in any way the well-being of their country.

Louis XV, in spite of a certain interest which he took in foreign politics, was the quintessence of weakness. He had no individuality; he remained to the end of his reign a mere nullity. As long as Fleury was alive there was always some one who could guide affairs, but after the cardinal's death there was no one who, like Richelieu or Mazarin, was capable of taking the lead and of conceiving and carrying out a policy. The court during Louis's reign degenerated with its monarchy. The influence of the regent, Philip of Orleans, had been bad, and no one was found strong enough to enforce even outward decorum or to lessen the enormous expenses connected with the royal household.

In the days of Turgot and Necker the pensions paid to courtiers alone amounted to some millions, and all attempts in Louis XVI's reign to reduce the amounts paid were stoutly resisted. So powerful did the Court become that at the time of the Seven Years' War no minister could hope to maintain himself unless he was a courtier, and Calonne found, in 1783, on taking office that it was necessary, in order to avert the hostility of the courtiers, to lavish on them large sums. Though the majority of Frenchmen had remained profoundly royalist throughout Louis XV's reign, the courtiers, who owed everything to the king, discussed revolutionary philosophy and were by no means loyal to the monarchical principle.

The weakness of the monarchy extended to the whole governmental machine, which required many thorough reforms. The evils attendant on an administration presided over by a king like Louis XV were bound to increase and develop with extraordinary rapidity, and as there was no chance of improvement these soon became intolerable.

Under his weak and ineffective rule the control exercised by Louis XIV over the financial administration was no longer enforced, and the contrôleur-général with his thirty intendants managed the whole internal administration—often in the most arbitrary manner. As the contrôleur found himself more and more occupied with matters concerning trade, public works, and agriculture as well as finance, the affairs of the provinces were practically under the sole control of the thirty intendants. Acts of tyranny by these officials could only with difficulty be punished, for government agents were tried by a special court —the Conseil des Parties—and by a special code of law. Royal agents were free from control and armed with *lettres de cachet*, and, in the absence of a free press, were under no fear of any public criticism or discussion of their conduct.

Necker's Compte Rendu, issued in 1781, was the first attempt to give the country any information as to the financial position of the government; and even in 1787 the assembly of notables was unable to comprehend a statement of the condition of the finances, though it had been called together to devise some means of relieving the impending bankruptcy of France. At a time so critical in the history of France men of honesty and capacity were sadly needed, but all through the century, while the government was often pursuing a radically wrong foreign policy and becoming more and more involved in financial difficulties, few men gifted with any administrative talent arose. Turgot stands out prominently among the nonentities who pass across the stage of French administration during the period between Louis XIV's death and the Revolution, and now and again such able ministers or financiers as the brothers Paris and Machault appear for a short period. For this dearth of able statesmen the bureaucratic system established by the Grand Monarque is principally to blame. The whole tendency of the French bureaucracy was to produce mediocrities and reduce men to one level. Like Frederick the Great, Louis XIV left behind him excellent clerks capable of managing elaborate details, but no race of administrators able to conceive and carry out a policy worthy of a country like France.

What made matters worse was that ministers were usually chosen from the *maîtres des requêtes,* who numbered about eighty in all, and when appointed ministers could only assure themselves by constant intrigues and bribery that their tenure of office would not be short. The influence of Madame de Pompadour, of Madame du Barry, and of Marie Antoinette was very considerable, and as a rule most baneful to the interests of France. The Comte d'Argenson and Machault, after a short struggle with Madame de Pompadour, fell and were exiled. Choiseul's overthrow was principally due to Madame du Barry, and Vergennes, with infinite difficulty, managed to carry out his scheme of foreign policy in face of the open opposition of Marie Antoinette. During the early part of Louis XV's reign the loyalty of the people was certainly profound, and in 1744, when the king was ill at Metz, during a campaign against the Austrians and English, the national grief was intense, for Louis's popularity was universal. But from the unpopular Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle the loyalty of the people began sensibly to lessen, and during the contest between the Parlement of Paris and the court, in the years 1750–'56, the word revolution was heard in the streets of Paris. Much, however, was hoped for from the accession of Louis XVI, but when Turgot failed to carry out his reforming programme men began to realize that drastic changes in the whole administration were becoming necessary. In order to satisfy the nation, reforms, it was felt, would have to be far reaching and to include the nobles and clergy. There were about one hundred and forty thousand nobles in France, and these held one fifth of the soil. In Louis XIV's reign the nobles ceased for the most part to live on their estates, while by the establishment of the intendants they were deprived of the duties which naturally fell to them in their provinces. Attracted to Versailles, they retained their privileges, though deprived of their power. Exempted from the taille and not allowed to perform any duties, they still had the right of exacting dues and services from the people on their estates.

The peasants thus learned to hate the nobles for enforcing dues for which they performed no duties, while the crown, so far from conciliating the nobility, found in it and in the courtiers fierce critics of all its actions.

Among the noble class and in the *salons*, which were such a prominent feature of French society in the last century, philosophic discussions were common, and attacks were made on the monarchy and on the Church. Irreligious views became rapidly the fashion, and in 1784 The Mariage de Figaro, by Beaumarchais, was performed in Paris. Though a satire on the *ancien régime*, it was acted for nearly a year, and was very popular, for in it were boldly expressed the views of the ordinary Frenchman of the day. To his master Figaro makes the following remarks:

" Nobility, fortune, rank, office, how proud we are of them! What have you done to procure such blessings? You have taken the trouble to be born, no more! Otherwise, an ordinary man! Whereas I, an insignificant unit in the crowd, have had to employ more science and calculation merely to gain my living than has been devoted in the last hundred years to the government of all the Spains."

The fact was that, apart from the hardships inflicted

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on the peasants by the burden of taxation, rendered so necessarily heavy owing to the exemptions enjoyed by the privileged classes, there was the growing dissatisfaction at the very existence of a class which, on the score of superiority of birth, regarded all other classes as inferior. As the actual administration was in the hands of men belonging to the upper *bourgeois* class, who were for the most part better educated than the nobles, the hatred of the existing inequality between the upper and middle classes grew into a passion, and the main object of the early Revolutionists was to secure not so much liberty as equality.

Though humanitarian views were indeed held by many representatives of the nobility, though some nobles took an interest in agriculture and in local affairs, their desire for reforms was unreal and limited. The majority were determined to defend their privileges at all costs, and not suffer any diminution of their feudal dues. After Turgot's failure and retirement the nobles were strong enough to prevent any further attacks on them before 1789, and even set up fresh obstacles to any intrusion on their privileges. In England the share taken by the nobles in local affairs has always been considerable, and in the eighteenth century upon them equally with other men fell the burden of taxation. In France their exemption from taxation, their persistence in exacting small though irritating dues from the peasants, their inability to take the lead in local affairs, and the cleavage between them and the *bourgeoisie* rendered the nobles so unpopular that at the outbreak of the Revolution they had no chance of coming forward and directing the course of politics.

But if the nobles were unpopular, the clergy were more so. In the seventeenth century the Church had been vigorous, missionary, and national. But from the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes the Church in France began to deteriorate. It advocated persecution of the remaining Huguenots, it endeavoured to suppress Jansenism, it supported the bull Unigenitus. In the middle of the century the Archbishop of Paris advised his clergy not to give the last sacraments to any one who had not adhered to the bull. The Parlement of Paris led the opposition to this policy, and was supported by the middle classes. The higher clergy never again in the century secured the support or affections of the *bourgeoisie*.

Like the nobles, the Church was exempt from the taille and other taxes; it was very wealthy, and from its wealth the nation derived little or no benefit. All the religious work was done by the *curés*, who lived in the parishes and enjoyed only very small incomes. The upper clergy received and enjoyed the greater part of the money belonging to the Church, and did nothing in return for it. Patronage had fallen into the hands of the Jesuits, and nearly all the bishoprics in Louis XVI's reign were held by members of noble families, who enjoyed idle lives and immense revenues. Absentees abounded, and the upper clergy frequented the court, as the presentation of livings was usually managed by intrigues.

Thus while the cleavage between the upper and lower clergy sensibly increased, the detestation with which the bishops and the upper clergy were regarded was general and largely justifiable.

It is perfectly true that in other countries feudal dues were more oppressive than in France, the conditions of life more galling, and the mass of the people in far greater misery. It is also undeniable that French society was never more brilliant or more intellectual than during the period just preceding the Revolution. And while the middle classes were well-to-do, the peasant was a proprietor, and France was in certain districts honeycombed with peasant properties. But the very disappearance of some abuses and the gradual dissemination of enlightenment only made the existing state of things the more intolerable and the privileges of a small minority the more detestable. "The very prosperity," writes M. Sorel, "of the early part of Louis XVI's reign hurried on the movement, causing men to feel more keenly such vexations as remained and to desire more ardently to rid themselves of them. France was the country wherein ideas of reform were the most widely spread, minds were most cultivated, men were the most alike, the government well centralized, the nobility most reduced to insignificance, the corporate bodies most subjected to control, and the nation most homogeneous." *

The governmental system of France might possibly have been reformed without the violence and anarchy which attended the Revolution. But not only had the events of the Seven Years' War discredited the monarchy, not only was the financial system in a state of chaos, and France, though a rich country, on the verge of national bankruptcy, but for years past the whole political structure of the monarchy, together with one of its principal supports, the Church, had been subject to attacks at the hands of Voltaire, the Encyclopedists, and Rousseau. By their means the force of thought had been brought to bear on the institutions of the French government, which at the

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* Sorel, Europe after Revolution, vol. i, p. 145.

outbreak of the Revolution melted away, leaving to the Constituent Assembly the difficult task of constructing an adequate constitutional system.

Voltaire, as is well known, did not attack the monarchy, but by his assaults on the Church undermined one of its props and left it helpless before the Revolution. As the French upper classes had no share in the government, they took, as has been shown, a lively interest in the literature of the day, in the production of abstract theories of government, and in criticisms of the existing state of things.

While the methods of the government remained more or less medieval, the culture and knowledge pervading the French *salons* were distinctly modern. Philosophy became popular, and men accustomed themselves to deal not with concrete facts, but with general principles. No regard was paid to the past, Montesquieu being the only distinguished writer who had any sympathy with the former history of France, but attention was mainly directed to forming new theories on social and political questions. Clothed in a brilliant style, the works of Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot, and others were widely read, and the study of philosophy became very popular in France. Though the writings of the leading literary men were marked by a violence and a boldness hitherto unknown in the history of French literature, the government regarded the views laid down as too theoretical to deserve repression. Voltaire led the attack, which developed into two distinct phases, the first antireligious, and the second antisocial. Disbelieving in theology, Voltaire had the utmost horror of cruelty and injustice. He had no wish or intention to change or even to attack the political system of France;

and, though aware of its many abuses, he preferred to devote the full force of an unusually lucid style to carrying on an anti-Catholic crusade. In prose essays, in dramas, in history, and poetry he levelled the most pitiless criticisms at the weaknesses of the Church. Montesquieu, indeed, had not only inaugurated a system of political criticism, but had suggested many necessary reforms in France; Voltaire actually started an antireligious agitation in France which has never been finally laid. The Church had ceased to have any real hold on the educated classes in France, and Voltaire, after a valuable sojourn in England, returned to France, having studied English philosophy and history.

Animated by an intense admiration for the freedom of thought and toleration which he found in England, and impressed by the light weight of taxation borne by the English and by the absence of exemptions such as the upper classes in France enjoyed, he determined *écrasez l'infâme*—i. e., to destroy the ecclesiastical system existing in France. The cruelties inflicted on Calas and La Barré roused him to fury, and he wrote bitterly against the medieval customs which still continued to exist in the Catholic Church. Destructive his whole method certainly was, and though his arguments were often absurd and weak, it remains true that his attacks contributed greatly to the overthrow of the corrupt Gallican Church. His influence was widespread, and his ideas were accepted by many of the aristocratic reformers both within and without France. Frederick the Great, Pombal, D'Aranda, and other reformers fell under the spell of his writings, and in France Turgot and his followers were equally affected by his influence.

In his attack on the Church Voltaire was aided by the hostility existing throughout the century between the Jesuits and Jansenists, and by the violent antagonism which the Parlement of Paris showed against the ecclesiastical system. During the regency of Orléans the Jansenists had been treated on the whole with tolerance, but even before the death of the regent the struggle between them and the Jesuits, which had first burst forth in Louis XIV's reign, was renewed. The Parlement of Paris, which held Jansenist views, adopted a very independent tone, and, till its suppression, in 1770, engaged at intervals in a series of struggles against the leading French ecclesiastics, who were supported by the king and court. In these struggles the mass of the nation, which had no adequate means of making its voice heard, backed up the Parlement, and that body from 1750 found itself regarded as the mouthpiece of the popular discontent at the incompetence of the government as well as at the intolerance and corruption of the Church. The ground was indeed well prepared for the reception of Voltaire's scathing criticisms.

The antireligious movement from almost the middle of the century was accompanied by an antisocial crusade, of which Diderot, D'Alembert, and other contributors to the Encyclopedia took a leading part.

So convinced was the government of the dangerous character of the views enunciated by the Encyclopedists that the Encyclopedia after a short existence was suppressed. The Encyclopedia essayed to give a summary of all knowledge, and to bring about the reform of the national abuses. In it labour and trade were praised, toleration in religious matters was advocated, and the institutions of France were examined by men imbued with the "positive" philosophy. There was nothing essentially democratic in the articles of the Encyclopedia any more than in the writings of Voltaire. The tendency of the Encyclopedia was to inculcate materialistic views in place of Catholic doctrines, and to urge the importance of education, tolerance, and freedom of thought in the growth of man.

Attention to the anomalies in French society was thus vigorously pointed out, and the intellectual awakening of France was considerably furthered.

It was, however, left to Rousseau to appeal to the masses, and by the enormous influence of his writings to divert men from the practical reforms urged by Voltaire and the Encyclopedists to visionary ideals. Rousseau, indeed, found the ground well prepared for the reception of his views. Born at Geneva, his Calvinistic tendencies are fully exemplified in the vigour and passion of his denunciations. Voltaire is said to have made sceptics, while Rousseau's writings inculcated fanaticism. Voltaire and Diderot represented the intellectual side of the literature which preceded and prepared the way for the Revolution; Rousseau exemplified the emotional side. While Voltaire and Diderot would willingly have averted a revolution by means of reforms, Rousseau made the Revolution a certainty.

In his Nouvelle Héloïse Rousseau idealized the lives of the lower middle class; he urged that more consideration should be given to the lower orders, and, extolling simplicity, he drew a picture of what country life should be.

In Émile, a work on education, Rousseau declared that education should develop the inherent good in children, and thus he ran counter to the principles of Roman Catholic teaching. All, whether rich or poor, ought, he said, to be educated, and the enunciation of this democratic sentiment, which has since been widely recognised, roused considerable enthusiasm in France. His Contrat Social was, however, his most famous and most influential work. In it he founds the sovereignty of the people upon an original compact, and advances for consideration a definite system of politics. The sovereignty acquired by the people was inalienable or indivisible, for according to Rousseau "man is born free," and, "in place of destroying natural equality, the fundamental fact, on the contrary, substitutes a moral and legitimate equality for so much physical inequality as nature had been able to place between men; though they may be unequal in strength or intellect, they all become equal by convention and right." With Rousseau a constructive phase was entered upon, in which society was to be reconstructed on certain principles. "The end of every system of legislation," he said, "consists of two chief objects, liberty and equality. Liberty, because all individual dependence is so much strength subtracted from the body of the state; equality, because liberty can not exist without it." His attitude towards fraternity was equally clear. "Fraternity," according to him, is implied in the "citizenship" of the individual members of the state. Thus the well-known doctrines of liberty, equality, and fraternity were openly taught in the Contrat Social. Influenced by Rousseau, the revolutionary movement passed from the practical and intellectual into the emotional and sentimental stage. The nation, roused by his picture of the existing wrongs of society, demanded immediate reforms. The very basis of French society was undermined from below and attacked from above. In 1788 national bankruptcy had to be faced. "The foundations of authority," writes Mr. Lecky, "were completely sapped. Concessions which at an earlier period would have been welcomed with enthusiasm only whetted the appetite for change. A great famine occurring at a time of great political excitement immensely strengthened the element of disorder. The edifice of government tottered and fell, and all Europe resounded with its fall." *

It will thus be evident that after Louis XIV's death the French monarchy gradually lost its hold on the nation, and that the failure in Canada and India, together with the reverses suffered in Europe during the Seven Years' War, intensified the existing want of confidence in the executive.

Vergennes did, indeed, by his successful intervention in the American war, restore to some extent the waning prestige of the monarchy. But the price was a heavy one, for the country could ill bear the expense connected with the aid given to the American colonists, and bankruptcy became imminent. Had it not been for the bad fiscal system—the heritage of ages—France might have gradually reformed her institutions. As it was, her finances had become so hopelessly involved that it is true to say that the immediate cause of the Revolution was the bad fiscal system. During these years the attacks of Voltaire on the Church, of Diderot and his friends on existing political abuses, and of Rousseau on the general condition of society undermined all the political and social institutions of France. The middle class saw in the financial necessities of the government an opportunity to effect a political

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* Lecky, History of England in the Eighteenth Century, v. p. 442.

transformation, to overthrow the power of the Church and the privileges of the nobility, and to gain equality. The unfortunate decision of the nobles to cling to the remnants of their feudal rights threw the whole peasant population on the side of the middle class, and it only required the summoning of the States-General to give the deathblow to an essentially rotten social and political system.

CHAPTER XVI

THE REVOLUTION OF 1789

The Revolution which broke out in France in 1789 passed through three distinct phases. From 1789 to 1792 important social changes were carried out which gave to the French people that equality for which it craved. The land system was revolutionized, and was freed from the remains of its feudal burdens; the land was divided. From 1792 to 1795 republican doctrines were subordinated to a despotism called into existence to defend France against foreign attacks. From 1795 to 1799 France, under the Directory, enjoyed her first real experiment of republican government. In 1789 it is said that four fifths of the meadows, forests, and fish ponds and one sixth of the agricultural land were in the hands of the nobles. To put it in another way, half the country was held by from 200,000 to 300,000 persons and a quarter of the land by corporations. In the division which took place after the outbreak of the Revolution the peasants gained enormously, the *bourgeoisie* received large portions of the Church lands, and thus a new class of proprietors was created, bound by interest to uphold the Revolution.

The causes of the Revolution have already been indicated and the justification for the widespread determination throughout France for extensive political and social reforms has been fully shown. The exorbitant privileges and exactions of the *noblesse* and upper clergy required immediate removal, the financial and administrative chaos demanded drastic treatment, and a reorganization of the whole system of government was obviously needed. The States-General, which met on May 5, 1789, proved fully alive to the exigencies of the situation, and the third estate was resolved to place the estate of the nobles and that of the clergy on an equality with itself as far as regarded the sharing of the national burdens. The *cahiers* or petitions drawn up by the local assemblies demanded ecclesiastical reforms, the abolition of the pecuniary and other privileges of the upper classes, the equalization of taxation, the sovereignty of the law, an improvement in the administration of justice, and, in a word, the suppression of the various extortions and wrongs which had been borne for centuries.

The cleavage which had existed between the classes in France from early times, and which had been aggravated by the policy of Richelieu, Mazarin, and Louis XIV, had produced a sense of irritation and injustice which could only have been removed by a frank avowal on the part of the privileged orders of the necessity for a thoroughgoing scheme of reform, and by a sympathetic attitude towards the representatives of the third estate. But, instead of adopting such an attitude, the *noblesse* threw itself into opposition to the people of France, and it was not till the Bastille had fallen, on July 14th, that the king and court realized the full meaning of the movement, which, by their own mistakes, had passed beyond their control.

The social changes demanded were as far as possible immediately carried out, a process assisted by constant migrations of the nobles across the frontier, and within three years a complete social transformation took place, trade guilds and clerical corporations were swept away, and the fiscal and administrative system was abolished. On August 4, 1789, feudal dues, game laws, tithes, the salt tax, and other oppressive burdens were removed, serfdom was done away with, and distinctions of birth suppressed. A declaration of the rights of man was issued on August 26th, laying down certain democratic principles, such as the sovereignty of the people, the freedom of the press, the supremacy of the law, and liberty of thought. To these may be added the right of every citizen to assist in framing laws, in controlling the assessment of taxes, and in the spending of public money. Property henceforward was to be secure, taxation was to be proportional, the country was to be divided into eighty-three administrative departments, and the place of the independent Church was taken by a number of salaried state officials instituted by the bishops. The enthusiasm roused by Rousseau's writings may account for the fact that while the Constituent Assembly declared the sovereignty of the people it remained loyal to Louis XVI and entertained no idea of deposing him, while at the same time a property qualification was retained which invalidated the principle that each citizen had a voice in the formation of the laws. These and other anomalies, due partly to excitement, partly to want of experience in the administration of affairs, detract little from the fact that the Constituent Assembly conferred lasting benefits on France. The remnants of feudalism were abolished, the judicial system was reorganized and improved, and, till 1792, it may be said that on the whole the intellectual revolution led by Montesquieu, Voltaire, and the Encyclopedists held its own.

In England, as in France, the best intellects hoped that the revolutionary movement would lead to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. Headed by such men as Mounier, Malouet, and Mirabeau, the followers of Montesquieu, who desired to base the Revolution on historical principles, aspired to set up two chambers, as in England, and to separate the executive, the legislative, and the judicial powers.

As time went on the hopes of all moderate men were overthrown, and it became evident that there was no chance of " a philosophic resettlement of society."

The folly of the court, the absence of any statesman at the head of affairs, and the death of Mirabeau not only justified the distrust felt of the executive, but played into the hands of the rationalist party, which, permeated with the views of Rousseau, decided to reconstruct *de novo* French society and the French government.

Till the promulgation of the constitution of 1791, however, the revolutionists hoped that these expectations would be realized, and that their principles would be universally adopted. But it soon became evident that the millennium which would be brought about by the execution of Rousseau's ideals was still as far off as ever. The difficulty in carrying out the principles of Rousseau's gospel had been experienced in drawing up the constitution, but the Constituent Assembly, satisfied that it had solved the problem of translating Rousseau's principles into facts, separated on September 20, 1791.

Before its dissolution it had enacted that none of its members should serve in the Legislative Assembly, which met the following month, and that no revision of the constitution should be effected before 1800.

The difficulties encountered by the Constituent Assembly were obviously prodigious, and the only wonder is that more mistakes were not made. The absence of any foundation on which to build a party system, the lack of practical experience among most of the members, the failure to establish "liberty" in the accepted meaning of the term, and the division of France into many groups rendered it impossible either to divine what was the "general will" or, when discovered, to force all Frenchmen to acquiesce in it. Nevertheless, the Constituent Assembly had deserved well of the nation, and its efforts at reorganization were worthy of more consideration than they received. That drastic reforms were absolutely required is undeniable, and the opinion of Arthur Young carries great weight. "The true judgment to be formed of the French Revolution," he says, "must surely be gained from an attentive consideration of the evils of the old government. When these are well understood, as well as the extent and universality of the oppression under which they groaned—oppression which bore upon them from every quarter—it will scarcely be attempted to be urged that a revolution was not absolutely necessary to the welfare of the kingdom."

The years from 1792 to 1795 saw the destruction of the elaborate edifice reared with so much labour by the Constituent Assembly. The late Professor Seeley used to declare that there were two French revolutions—the one of 1789 and the Parisian revolution of 1792. In the early days of 1789 and 1790 the leaders in France did indeed imagine that they "were assembled to retrieve every fault of the past, to correct every error of the human mind, and to secure the happiness of future generations; doubt had no place in their minds, and infallibility presided perpetually over all their contradictory decrees."

These revolutionists, many of them animated with the best intentions, were convinced that all men were naturally reasonable and good, and that on the abolition of the institutions of ancient France their original qualities would again reappear. The authors of the Parisian revolution of August 10, 1792, of the deposition of the king, and of the fall of the monarchy were under no such illusions.

They did, indeed, date the first year of liberty from September 21, 1792, when the National Convention took the place of the discredited Legislative Assembly, but beyond the fact that some of their actions may be justified by the invasion of France by the Prussians, history will, on the whole, agree with Sieyès in his somewhat exaggerated estimate of their characteristics. The National Convention, he says, was a body of men "audacious without genius, whose incomprehensible force, whose monstrous, unexampled authority, was derived from their professions of liberty. Insensate and ferocious, they created obstacles while destroying the means of government, and when irritated by opposition they punished France for their own incapacity as rulers."

Though it saved France from invasion and defended not only its integrity against Europe, but also, at first, the principles of the Revolution, the government was guilty of needless atrocities and of the deaths of many thousands of harmless persons of all classes of society innocent of any crime. Though the remarkable work done by the Committee of Public Safety will always command the admiration of lovers of vigorous action and of careful and successful organization, and of those who admire successes in war, it remains true that the ideals of the men of '89 were carried out in a way which was never anticipated at the time of the meeting of the Constituent Assembly.

In 1792 and the succeeding years the dominant Jacobin party recognised the futility of the hope felt by the leaders of the Constituent Assembly that the French nation would unite in carrying out the revolutionary principles had faded away. Partly owing to the mistakes of the Constituent Assembly, partly owing to the impossibility of uniting a nation round certain impossible ideals, partly owing to the excesses of the Jacobins themselves, the nation in 1792 and 1793 was hopelessly disunited and broken up into sections. Under the stress of the danger of invasion by the armies of Europe, the Jacobin leaders resolved to intimidate the majority and force it into obedience to, and acquiescence in the views of the minority.

The methods they adopted are worthy of a short description, especially as Jacobinism has never died in France. It raised its head in 1848, and again in 1870 and 1871, only succumbing after a violent series of struggles in the streets of Paris.

The Jacobin rule in 1793 and 1794 will always be associated with the great Committee of Public Safety, which ruled France for upward of a year and astonished Europe by the successes which attended its vigorous action. In July, 1793, after the fall of the Girondists, this Committee was set in motion, and twelve members were rapidly chosen. Of the men whose work in connection with this Committee will always live, Carnot, Jean Bon Saint-André, the two Prieurs, and Lindet devoted themselves to the superintendence of military and naval matters, while Herault de Séchelles conducted foreign affairs. Billaud-Varenne and Collot-d'Herbois established the Reign of Terror and Barère acted as reporter, and Robespierre, who, alone of the members of the Committee, had a great reputation in Paris as well as in the Convention, was supported by Couthon and Saint-Just, and had no special duties assigned to him.

On September 5th "Terror was decreed to be the order of the day." The Reign of Terror was based on three institutions: the Committee of General Security, the Deputies on Mission, and the Revolutionary Tribunal. To the Committee of General Security was intrusted the general administration of the police of Paris and of France, and it consequently became a valuable instrument for organizing the system of the Terror. While the Committee of General Security supported and aided the Great Committee in Paris, deputies were sent regularly and systematically into the provinces. Their power was unlimited. These missions had been in vogue since 1792, and had become exceedingly important after the defeat of Neerwinden, in March, 1793, when it was necessary to raise additional forces from the provinces. But after the overthrow of the Girondists in Paris, on June 2d, it was essential that extraordinary measures should be adopted to overcome the risings in Normandy, Lyons, Bordeaux, and Marseilles.

Deputies, such as Lindet and Dubois Crancé, effected the pacification of Normandy and Lyons, and it was then seen how valuable obedient and terrorized departments would be as an adjunct to the Committee of Public Safety.

These deputies on mission were given unlimited powers, and as long as they sent large supplies of money to the Committee of Public Safety in Paris they received the most ample support. While one section of these deputies was employed in internal business, another section was sent to the various armies in service to keep an eye on the generals. There, too, their authority was unlimited, and even a general was powerless to carry out measures in opposition to their wishes.

As the basis of their elaborate system was terror, it will be seen what an important part was played by the Revolutionary Tribunal and by the military commissions in the armies and the provinces. Those who organized this tribunal and its subcommissions intended to terrorize the Parisians and the provincials into humble acquiescence in the rule of the Great Committee. This tribunal was reorganized in September, 1793, and divided into four sections, all under the superintendence of Fouquier-Tinville. It took cognizance of all political offences, and after its reorganization was remarkable for the expedition of its procedure. The law of suspects, by which almost every Frenchman or Frenchwoman could be arrested and condemned to death, and the law of the maximum, which compelled traders to sell articles at a fixed price, brought all classes within the reach of the tribunal. No part of Paris, or indeed of France, was safe from the action of numberless little Revolutionary committees, composed only of extreme Jacobins, and whose business was to fill the prisons. By the end of October, 1793, Paris was completely terrorized and the small Jacobin minority was triumphant. Politics were never mentioned, and the Parisians lived their ordinary life, frequented the theatres, and devoted themselves to pleasure, while each week saw numbers of innocent persons massacred. Such was the character of the Jacobin rule from 1793 to 1794—the domination of the bulk of the population by a small but well-organized minority.

Strong in the belief in the truth of the fundamental principles which guided their actions, the extreme revolutionary faction, headed by such men as Robespierre, Danton, Billaud-Varenne, and Couthon, resolved to force its opponents to accept the Jacobin programme. "We will make a graveyard of France," said the bloodthirsty Carrier, "rather than fail to regenerate her according to our ideas." And he carried out his fell purpose in La Vendée, where a religious and patriotic population was decimated by barbarities hitherto unknown in modern times. The political and social reforms enacted by the Constituent Assembly had been received in La Vendée with approbation, but the issue of the civil constitution of the clergy, on July 12, 1790, roused to fury a population attached to its religion and its priests. No greater blunder was ever made by the national assembly of any country than when the Constituent Assembly by shortsighted policy arrayed against itself the great body of the clergy, numbering some 64,000, and with them the Vendean people.

Persecution only still further alienated the Vendeans from the government. Disturbances took place in 1792, followed by conflicts between the peasants and the republicans, and it only required an attempt, in 1793, to enforce conscription in La Vendée to cause the smouldering embers of discontent to burst into a flame. The war that ensued was marked by the most hideous atrocities, and the Jacobin revealed himself in his real colours. No more scathing indictment of Jacobinism can be found than in the pages of The Real French Revolutionist, by Mr. Henry Jephson, where the revolutionist is unmasked and his conception of liberty, equality, and fraternity subjected to a microscopic analysis and criticism. Some 200,000 persons, including men, women, and children, perished at the hands of the republican hordes, the greater portion of the victims being members of the lesser *bourgeoisie* and peasants, religious liberty was destroyed, justice perished, the rights of property ceased to exist, and one of the most brutal and crushing absolutisms ever experienced was forced not only on La Vendée, but on the whole of France.

The war in La Vendée, however, has this special importance—that the agents of the revolutionary government, freed from all restraints, were able in the western provinces to illustrate the actual working of Jacobin principles in relation to the working classes, for whose benefit the Revolution had been brought about. The actions of these revolutionists in La Vendée "throw," writes Mr. Jephson, "as it were, Röntgen rays on the nature and methods and character of the French revolutionist and republican, piercing through outward semblances and asseverations, and revealing to us the actualities and innermost verities; . . . and the result is the most complete and realistic picture of the French revolutionist in his genuine character and the most impressive illustration of French revolutionary principles in untrammelled operation." *

The views held and carried out by Carrier and others in La Vendée were equally indorsed by the leading members of the Committee of Public Safety. The masterful

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* The Real French Revolutionist, by H. Jephson, p. 4.

Saint-Just was as emphatic and unhesitating in his views as any other member of the Mountain. "Even the indifferent are to be punished," he said; "all who are passive to the republic." To the Jacobins the "moral unity of France" meant universal submission to their doctrines, and whoever was opposed to them was to be proscribed. A narrow and cruel despotism was thus by the Reign of Terror imposed upon France in place of the liberty, equality, and fraternity offered to France in 1789. The principles of the Revolution within four years of their enunciation were reversed, and as soon as the tension on the frontier was relaxed and the victories of 1794 had established the supremacy of the French arms in western Europe a strong reaction set in against the Reign of Terror.

For this reaction the way had been prepared by the divisions among the Jacobin party. No sooner had the Girondists been swept away than the Jacobins began to quarrel among themselves. Robespierre and his party first overthrew the Hébertists, who were the most advanced of the Jacobins, and then turned upon the Dantonists, who had shown signs of a desire to end the Terror. Weakened by the success of his suspicious and revengeful policy, Robespierre himself fell before the determined attack of his foes. The prestige of the Convention was destroyed, but the French people, while desirous of the restoration of order and good government, remained determined not to run the risk of a restoration of the *ancien régime*. The establishment of the Directory in accordance with the constitution of 1795 would be followed, it was hoped, by the realization of those expectations which the Reign of Terror had for a time destroyed. Such hopes were not destined to be realized. The incapacity of the

Constituents had delivered France into the hands of the Terrorists, and their rule had inaugurated a period of anarchy, which practically continued till 1799. It was, however, hoped in 1795 that the Directory, the result of the reaction after the Reign of Terror, would seize the opportunity of giving France her first real experience of republican government.

In spite of the victories of the French arms in Italy in 1796–1797, the government of the Directory cannot be called a success for the republicans. At any rate, those of its members, like Carnot, who are remembered by posterity, owe their fame not to their republican virtues or to their devotion to the ideas of '89, but to their success as organizers of victory. "The annals of the Directory," says one writer, "would be the meanest passage in French history if they had not been relieved by the military triumphs of the man who was to destroy it." And a very cursory acquaintance with the history of this period shows that its successful military conquests alone gave the government some slight justification for its existence. It is unquestioned that the Directory stands prominently forward as being the worst government of modern times. The mismanagement of the finances continued till France became practically bankrupt, and under its rule society was characterized by dissoluteness and corruption. Never had France fallen so low, and never had the country suffered such demoralization and anarchy, as during the years when it was governed by the Directorial Constitution.

As the first real experiment of republican government in France, the years 1795 to 1799 have no little interest for students of French history. The Second Empire was always accused of excesses impossible to find in a republic, and Mr. Bodley quotes the saying of M. Jules Ferry after the fall of Napoleon III, that "France, delivered from the corruption of the empire, had entered into the period of the austere virtues." * A very slight examination of the history of the Directory leads to the conviction that republican governments are as liable to political corruption as any other *régime*. Before Napoleon III "the sole previous experiment of republican government in France which lasted long enough to produce a school of morals was the Directory, under which every iniquity, public and private, was encouraged, the incarnation of the *régime* being Barras, whose venality was eclipsed by his profligacy." † The middle class certainly cannot be congratulated on their first experiment in government, which ended in anarchy and the establishment of a despotism. Following so soon after the Reign of Terror, the conduct of the Directors led men to accept willingly, even at the price of their favourite political principles, the rule of Bonaparte.

The whole character of the period is one of internal conflict. The reaction of Thermidor had produced the one really popular movement of the Revolution. But the Convention, determined to perpetuate their powers, had employed the army, and the cannon of Vendémiaire assured for five years the triumph of the Jacobin minority and the establishment of the Directory; for some thirty years Paris saw no fresh attempt at a popular rising. During the years from 1795 to 1799 the government, supported by some 30,000 troops encamped at the gates of Paris, held its own in spite of the ever-increasing opposition to its maladministration.

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* France, by J. E. C. Bodley, vol. ii, p. 306.

† Ibid., vol. ii, p. 307.

Why a government so hated and despised, the existence of which was disliked by the mass of the nation, managed to rule France for five years has often puzzled historians. Revolutionary methods were unpopular, but the Directory adhered to them; legislation was paralyzed, and no confidence was felt in the existing laws; administration ceased to exist, and corruption flourished to an extent unheard of in monarchical France. The natural results followed the chaos into which the administration fell.

Western France openly rebelled, and many provinces, such as Rouergue, the Vivarais, the Cévennes, Haute-Auvergne, and Bas-Languedoc, became practically independent. With the exception of Paris, police arrangements were nonexistent in the country, while in order to raise money the Directory did not hesitate to plunder churches and to seize horses, grain, and clothing of all sorts. In this way the armies on which the government relied were supplied. In December, 1796, the Directory itself made the following report to the Council of the Five Hundred: "Every part of the administration is in decay, the pay of the troops is in arrear, the defenders of the country are in rags, and their disgust causes them to desert; the military and civil hospitals are destitute of all medical appliances, the state creditors and contractors can recover but small portions of the sums due to them, the high roads are destroyed and communications interrupted, the public officials are without salaries from one end of the republic to the other; everywhere sedition is rife, assassination organized, and the police impotent."

Though its very existence was hateful to the mass of the nation, there were various elements of strength in the position of the Directory. The war was till 1798 remarkably successful, and in war the Directory found its safety and strength. Paris, too, overawed and garrisoned by troops, was the Jacobin stronghold, and, as was usually the case, Paris ruled France. The middle classes, seeing that resistance was in vain, returned to the indifferent if not cowardly attitude adopted by them during the Reign of Terror. The peasants, who had gained in material prosperity by the Revolution, were resolved to run no risk of the return of the *ancien régime*, with its taille, gabelle, and intendants. They, indeed, hated the Directory because it oppressed the Church and harassed them for men, money, and kind; but even such exactions, they thought, were more endurable than the restoration of the Bourbons. "No revolution will ever come from the people," was the conclusion of Mallet du Pan, who further described the French nation as "at once cruel and frivolous, servile and licentious, impetuous at one moment in its complaints, and forgetting them without motive in the next, careless in suffering as in prosperity, incapable of foresight or of reflection, selling in the morning like savages the bed on which they are to lie at night; such in every age has been the character of the people, such are they at the present hour, and such they will ever remain until the end of time." What no doubt assisted the Directors in prolonging their tenure of office were the divisions existing in the ranks of their opponents. Opposed to them were several disorganized factions, while throughout the country division of opinion was very noticeable, some men desiring the return of the Bourbons, and others hoping for the re-enactment of the constitution of 1791.

But it was on the continuance of a successful war that the prolongation of the government depended, though the war led to a decline in the population, and men were sadly needed for the operations of the harvest and for industrial pursuits. "Nous serions perdus si nous faisions la paix," said Sieyès, and it was quite evident that the existence of the Directory depended on a vigorous prosecution of the war. "La Révolution dégénère en propagande armée, puis en conquête," is M. Albert Sorel's opinion: "le gouvernement militaire prévant sur le civil: la République est conduite à asseoir . . . sur la puissance extérieure et à vivre par les armées. Finalement, les armées envahissent la République, et s'en emparent." "The foreign policy of the Directory," it has been said, "was characterized by the philosophic insolence, the spirit of proselytism, and the desire of universal revolution" which had animated the Girondists. Of them it was remarked that "they would sooner see the universe in ashes than abandon their design of submitting it to their doctrines." "On peut tenter, on peut espérer la conversion d'un scélérat, jamais celle d'un philosophe." Like the Girondists, the Directory aimed at carrying out reforms according to their own views in every country occupied by French troops. The rights of nations were to be overthrown, and the states that submitted were to be treated as vassals of the French Republic. The startling victories of Bonaparte in Italy led to peace with Austria in 1797, and the Directory, supported by troops, was able to bring about the *coup d'état* of Fructidor and to triumph for the last time over its opponents. This success, coupled with the signing of the peace of Campo Formio, placed the Directors at the height of their power.

But their days were numbered. Bonaparte had only supported them because he was not yet prepared to take their place, and the army was unaware of the character of the men to whose aid they had come. After Fructidor the illusion that France was enjoying a republican constitution was destroyed. "Constitutional government," says Thiers, "is a chimera at the conclusion of a revolution such as that of France. It is not under the shelter of legal authority that parties whose passions have been so violently excited can arrange themselves and repose; a more vigorous power is required to restrain them, to fuse their still burning elements, and protect them against foreign violence. That power is the empire of the sword." "The first general," wrote Mallet du Pan, "who could raise the standard of revolt might carry half the country with him." It only required failure abroad to bring about the overthrow of the government. Fructidor was followed by increased disorder and anarchy at home and by partial bankruptcy; the liberty of the press was suspended; the elections in many of the departments were quashed in order to secure the return of the nominees of the Directors; and the persecuting laws against nonjuring priests and nobles were re-enacted. The absence of Bonaparte in Egypt no doubt accounted for the loss of Italy by the French troops in the war of the Second Coalition. The war was mismanaged from Paris, and France was threatened with invasion and anarchy. At the instigation of Sieyès, Bonaparte, who had returned from Egypt, carried out the revolution of Brumaire, overthrew the Directory, and established the Consulate. Republican institutions had failed disastrously. In four years the Directory had brought France to bankruptcy, civil war, and almost barbarism. The nation was weary of popular institutions, and with the fall of the Directory formally renounced Jacobinism. It demanded a strong and intelligent government, and in Bonaparte it found a man in whose talents it had full confidence. The revolution of the 18th Brumaire was one of the most important *coups d'état* which the world has ever seen, and France has felt its effects ever since.

CHAPTER XVII

THE GREAT NAPOLEON

THE Napoleonic *régime* differed from every other form of government hitherto seen in France. Napoleon's rule was in no sense a continuation of that of Louis XVI, nor of that of the Constituent Assembly.

At one time in his career he was pleased to trace his descent from Charles the Great, whose empire he may have dreamed of reviving. He was, however, a product partly of the eighteenth-century reform movement, partly of French Jacobinism. He carried out many of the reforms so prized by the enlightened kings and ministers of the period just anterior to the French Revolution; at the same time his *raison d'être* was to be found in the Revolution of 1792, and he adopted the theories of the Jacobins.

Though he employed Jacobins and perpetuated the spirit of Jacobinism, he used every effort to rally round him the old *noblesse*, whose hostility to Jacobinism never slept. His principal aim was to found a vast centralized system, and this object he carried out thoroughly. The overthrow of the Napoleonic fabric of centralization, which is still existing in France, would, it is believed, result in anarchy and disaster. In 1848 some of the republicans hoped that this system would be profoundly modified, and that local and autonomic institutions would be established.

But the conservative French peasant refused to consider the possibility of such changes, and threw himself into the arms of Napoleon III. On the return of Bonaparte from Egypt in 1799 it was plain to every Frenchman that a strong government alone could cope with the existing chaos within France and remedy the failure of the army in Italy. It was not the time to attempt to organize a constitutional *régime* or to carry out the ideas of 1789. A man was required who had not the task of Oliver Cromwell before him, viz., the prevention of an outbreak of a social revolution, but who was expected to end the anarchy consequent on a revolution which had continued for ten years.

This was the task which Napoleon, who was thirty years old and a general in the army, was called upon to perform. Instead of acting as an irresponsible head of the state, with no special interest in the working of the constitution, as was the hope of Sieyès, Napoleon, by his victories and innate genius, made himself master of the French nation.

His career can be studied from many points of view, but if simply regarded as an organizer and as a conqueror Napoleon's position can be easily realized and appreciated. His first attempts at organization were effected during the Consulate—that period preliminary to the empire which is included between the years 1799 and 1805. The condition of France was calculated to make the boldest administration despair. Mr. S. Lowes Dickinson, in his Revolution and Reaction in France (pages 25 and 26), has admirably described the situation which Bonaparte had to face in 1799: "Confusion, ignorance, and corruption were the rule in administration and finance; hospitals had degenerated into nurseries of disease; public buildings were everywhere in decay; the roads were becoming impassable, and were infested by brigands; in certain districts a third of the population lived by begging and stealing; the law of the maximum, the requisitions, the war, the insecurity, the difficulties of communication, had ruined commerce; elementary education was becoming extinct, and where it existed was little better than a farce; everything in every department had been destroyed, and, in spite of innumerable positive decrees, nothing as yet had been recreated; every writing and record had been obliterated from the chart of France, and the only new inscription was a note of interrogation."

In the work of reconstruction Bonaparte had, he knew, the whole nation at his back. The revolution of Brumaire, he saw, had awakened the most lively hopes in the hearts of the French people. "Never probably," he said, "has a monarch found his people more devoted to his wishes, and it would be unpardonable for a clever general not to take advantage of such a situation to establish a better government on a solid foundation. . . . The people, with the exception of the contemptible band of anarchists, are so weary and disgusted with the horrors and follies of the revolutionists that they are convinced that any change, no matter what, will bring some improvement."

The constitution drawn up with so much trouble by Sieyès was a masterpiece of complicated machinery. The famous abbé, whose fame as a constitution-monger is unequalled in modern times, had been till 1799 the political adviser of the Directory, though from his dislike of responsibility he had till then steadily refused to be a Director. Mallet du Pan's description of him is hardly too severe:

"The enemy of every power of which he is not the spiritual adviser, he has abolished the nobles because he was not one of them, his own order because he was not archbishop, the great landowners because he was not rich; and he will upset all the thrones because nature has not made him a king." It was this man who hoped that Bonaparte would rule in accordance with a mass of constitutional machinery absolutely bristling with checks upon any aspirations in the direction of absolutism. At the head of affairs were three consuls, one supreme, the others only advisers. Next came a Council of State, nominated by the first consul, and the business of this Council was to initiate laws. A Tribunate of one hundred chosen by the Senate was to discuss the laws, a Legislative body of three hundred chosen by the Senate was to accept or reject the laws, and a Senate of eighty nominated by the consuls for life had the power of vetoing any laws which affected the constitution.

In such fashion was provided the machinery for producing legislation. The administrative arrangements were simpler. To the first consul was intrusted the power of appointing the ministers, while in each department a prefect, chosen by the first consul, presided over an elected council, and in each town a similarly chosen council was presided over by a mayor nominated by the prefect. The first consul was equally supreme in matters of justice. He appointed the judges for life, and the Senate nominated the members of the Cour de Cassation, which sat in Paris.

Such a constitution was not likely to remain intact for long. "Sieyès," said Bonaparte, "put shadows on every side; shadows of legislative power, shadows of judiciary power, shadows of a government. It required a substance somewhere, and in faith I put it there."

The constitution in the hands of the successful general could not escape mutilation, and two years before the fall of the Directory Bonaparte had indicated clearly what his intentions were with regard to any obstacles which Sieyès or any other politician might set in the way of a successful general. "Do you suppose," wrote Bonaparte to Miot in May, 1797, "that I triumph in Italy for the glory of the lawyers of the Directory—a Carnot or a Barras? Do you suppose that I mean to found a republic? What an idea! A republic of thirty millions of people! With our morals, our vices! How is such a thing possible? The nation wants a chief—a chief covered with glory—not theories of government, phrases, ideologcal essays that the French do not understand. They want some playthings. That will be enough. They will play with them, and let themselves be led, always supposing they are cleverly prevented from seeing the goal toward which they are moving." Having chosen his ministers, Bonaparte at once swept away all nominal checks on his power. Sieyès and his supporters had no doubt intended to set up a republic in Brumaire, but Bonaparte first got himself chosen consul for ten years, and in 1802 for life, and Sieyès found that by his constitution a strong monarchy had practically been created.

The campaign of Marengo, in 1800, consolidated Bonaparte's position. After Hohenlinden peace with Austria was assured, and the Treaty of Luneville was an immense triumph for Bonaparte, and enabled him, especially after the Treaty of Amiens was signed with England in 1802, to devote himself to the work of reconstruction.

The following list of institutions created give at a glance an idea of the extent and character of the reforms carried out under the direction of the first consul:

(1) The concordat, which restored the relations between the Gallican Church and the Papacy.
(2) The establishment of the University of France.
(3) The reorganization of the judicial system.
(4) The Code Napoléon.
(5) A system of local government.
(6) The foundation of the Bank of France.
(7) The establishment of the Legion of Honour.
(8) The settlement of a system of taxation.

The concordat was an admirable piece of diplomacy, and though a blow at Jacobinism, was a valuable part of a general pacification. It attached the clergy to the government and weakened their connection with the Bourbons. The attacks made on the Church by the revolutionists of '89 were as unstatesmanlike as those made in later times by the third republic. Bonaparte was far too wise to ignore the religious sentiments of the nation, and though he had little sympathy with religious observances, he was fully alive to the influence wielded by the clergy among the peasantry. Joseph of Austria had well-nigh ruined the Hapsburg inheritance by his foolish alienation of the Church. Bonaparte made the clergy indeed dependent on the state, but by the concordat he ended the religious war which had continued for well-nigh ten years and had done more than any other single circumstance to destroy the work of the Revolution.

When the Church had fallen through the attacks of the revolutionists the University of Paris, together with the twenty-one universities of France, also fell. By certain laws passed in May, 1806, and March, 1808, Bonaparte founded the modern University of France. "In the establishment of a teaching body," he said, "my principal aim is to have a means of directing political and social opinions." He thus looked on educational bodies as a means of forming political opinion and of preventing the spread of erroneous views. "So long," he argued, "as people are not taught from their childhood whether they are to be republicans or monarchists, Catholics or free-thinkers, the state will not form a nation; it will rest on vague and uncertain bases, and be constantly subject to change and disorder." He therefore formed the whole teaching profession into a corporation endowed by the state, and to the university was intrusted the control of all education, whether higher or secondary. By these means he enlisted education and the rising generation on his side, and provided France with a national system of education which lasted till our own day.

Equally dependent on the central government was the whole judicial system. From 1802 he appointed the justices of the peace and exercised a close supervision over the appointment of the other judges, a similar supervision over the lists of jurors being exercised by the prefects. Above all civil and criminal courts was placed the Cour de Cassation, and the Senate was allowed, if necessary, to interfere with the working of the system. While justice was reorganized Napoleon carried on the codification of the law which had already been begun in the early days of the Revolution. The Code Civil, though it crystallized the work of the Constituent Assembly and of the Committee of Public Safety, is known as the Code Napoléon, and was promulgated in 1809. Though not the result of his own conception, it bears upon it the impress of his own individual genius. Other codes were the Code de Commerce, the Code Pénal, and the Code d'Instruction Criminelle, all of which were issued through his influence. "Thus," writes Mr. Bodley, "the whole centralized administration of France, which in its stability has survived every political crisis, was the creation of Napoleon and the keystone of his fabric. It was he who organized the existing administrative divisions of the departments, with the officials supervising them and the local assemblies attached to them."

The Code Napoléon is still in force, the relations of Church and State are still regulated by the concordat. The university was founded by him, the Bank of France owes its origin to him, the Legion of Honour was his creation. His work of construction and reorganization forms the present framework of modern France, and most of this work dates from the Consulate. In place of chaos order was established, in place of a hopelessly mismanaged and corrupt system of taxation was substituted a regular equitable system which satisfied the peasant class.

The price paid for this organization of the administration of religion, of justice, and of finance was the establishment of a despotism which, though infinitely more tolerable than the despotism of either the Convention or the Directory, tended as time went on to press heavily on all classes. The liberty of the press was not established, religion was not allowed independent action, education was only encouraged in so far as it conduced to the strengthening of the military system of France and to the support of the Napoleonic dynasty. Liberty in the true sense did not exist, but the principle of equality was favoured by

Napoleon. Though the great emperor died a prisoner on Saint Helena, and though since his death France has seen the restoration of the Bourbons, the reign of Louis Philippe, and the second empire, followed by the establishment of the existing republic, the supremacy of the state, imposed by Napoleon, has never seriously been threatened, and the centralized system of the first empire remains most suitable to the French temperament.

Had Napoleon rested after the Peace of Tilsit from his career of conquest he might have ruled with success a powerful and contented nation. As a statesman, lawgiver, and organizer he could be compared to Cæsar and Charles the Great; in his success in founding a despotism agreeable to the mass of the nation he held a position similar to that of Louis XIV. Unfortunately, like the Grand Monarque, he was carried away by ambition. Louis XIV lived to see Europe combined against him and the Peace of Utrecht signed; Napoleon similarly found in the War of Liberation his match in the united armies of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and the two Treaties of Paris destroyed his magnificent projects for the aggrandizement of France.

It would seem that with his adoption of the imperial title his ambition extended in proportion as his power grew. His victories of Austerlitz, Jena, and Friedland appear to have drawn his attention away from the work of government and to have concentrated his attention on extensive conquests by sea and land. Louis XIV had attempted in vain to found a world-wide empire, and Napoleon endeavoured to revive an idea impossible of realization in the nineteenth century. Supremacy in the Mediterranean, which would become a French lake, the partition of the Turkish Empire in favour of France, the ruin of English commerce, of her colonies, and of her empire in India, to be followed by the unquestioned domination of Napoleon in Europe—such were the dreams which the emperor endeavoured to turn into realities from the battle of Friedland onward.

This second portion of his career possesses that interest which always attaches to the decline and fall of an institution, a country, or a man. As Napoleon proceeded on his career of conquest France found herself drained of men and wealth. The lives of his subjects were sacrificed, with the result that France, after being twice occupied by foreign armies, was again placed under the domination of the Bourbons. "A great nation," writes Madame de Staël, " would not have endured the monotonous and degrading weight of despotism if military glory had not continually roused and animated public sentiment." In place of the enthusiasm for liberty which the soldiers of the earlier revolutionary armies had felt, was substituted a love of glory and a keen desire to win distinction on the field of battle. The minds of both officers and men were inflamed with ambition and an eagerness to obtain wealth. Their prospects of advancement depended on Napoleon, who successfully converted the republican into imperialist armies devoted to himself.

He was thus able to take advantage of the mistakes of the Austrian generals, of the weakness and vacillation of Prussia, and of the consequent isolation of Russia; and having forced Austria and Prussia to submission and fought the Russians at Eylau and Friedland, he found himself well advanced along the road to universal monarchy. It is true that at first sight the Peace of Tilsit seems to be a check on his successful career. Napoleon, however, had no intention of sharing his power with Alexander or of modifying his ambition. He still intended to take over the Turkish Empire; he had placed in the newly formed Duchy of Warsaw a prince of the Confederation of the Rhine. In consenting to the Treaty of Tilsit Napoleon was partly actuated by the knowledge that his French subjects were weary of wars. Jena had caused no excitement in Paris, where the discontent at the continual warfare was being encouraged by secret intrigues. Having taken severe measures for the suppression of all discussion of his government in the press, or in the writings of Madame de Staël or of any author or authoress, Napoleon endeavoured to satisfy the Parisians by his presence, and by numerous *fêtes*. But his determination to ruin England and to dominate the Continent never slept. The seizure of the Danish fleet in September, 1807, roused him to fury, and from henceforth an understanding between Napoleon and England was out of the question. His one chance of founding a dynasty and remaining on the throne lay in satisfying Europe that he was able to put a limit to his ambition and conquests. But Napoleon, bent on the destruction of England, entered upon a fresh series of efforts, aimed principally at England—efforts which included attempts to subjugate Spain, Austria, and Russia. Europe being thoroughly alarmed at this threatened overthrow of the balance of power, and each state being fearful for its own independence, the ground was gradually prepared for the War of Liberation, in which the Napoleonic *régime* perished. Napoleon, however, in 1807 had no regard for these considerations. He was resolved to carry out his schemes without further delay, and decided to conquer Portugal, to close her ports to the English, and to dominate the whole Spanish Peninsula. Thus the maritime resources of Spain and Portugal would be turned against England, and a great step taken in the annihilation of England's commercial superiority.

Spain had been the ally of France since 1795, and Napoleon imagined that by associating her with France in the conquest of Portugal he would strengthen the alliance between the two countries. Finding that the Continental system was opposed by the Pope, who had also refused to recognise Joseph Bonaparte as King of Naples, French troops occupied Rome in April, 1808, and the papal states were formed into departments of France. These steps seriously affected the relations of Napoleon with Catholic Europe, and especially with Spain. It was a grave blunder to alienate at this crisis in the history of France the whole Catholic world, and from this moment Napoleon's power began to decline. After committing one blunder the emperor proceeded to commit others, until he brought about the final resistance of Europe to his domination. No better illustrations of his insensate folly can be found than in his conduct in Spain. Ignoring the fact that he had alienated the Spanish nation, with whom religious fanaticism was strong, Napoleon proceeded to substitute for Charles IV and his son his brother Joseph, King of Naples. This insult roused the Spaniards. They refused to recognise Joseph as their king, and after a war of five years Napoleon had to confess that he had signally failed to subdue the Spanish Peninsula.

This gigantic failure, due partly to the determination to ruin England's commerce, partly to a misapprehension concerning the real feelings of the Spaniards and the peculiar strength of Spain, entangled Napoleon in meshes from which there was no escape and drove him into situations from which there was no retreat. "Trafalgar forced him," wrote Mr. Fyffe, "to impose his yoke upon all Europe or to abandon the hope of conquering Great Britain." The attempt to coerce Spain or Portugal began a resistance to the French in the Spanish Peninsula which continued till the emperor's overthrow, while the courage of the Spaniards stirred up an active opposition in Austria to the French domination in Germany. Napoleon apparently hoped that the ancient European kingdoms would prove as obedient as the Confederation of the Rhine or the small Italian states. He found, however, that he had miscalculated the power of resistance and the patriotism existing in such countries as Spain, Austria, Russia, and Prussia. "Spain was Spain," wrote Professor Seeley, "but those Italian and German states were not Italy and Germany, but only in Italy and Germany. . . . It was evident that the one thing needful was found, and a new idea took possession of the mind of Europe. That idea was not democracy or liberty; it was nationality. It was the idea of the nation as distinguished from the state; the union by blood as distinguished from the union by interest."

In July, 1808, Joseph entered Madrid. In the same month a French army under Dupont capitulated at Baylen, and the following month Junot capitulated at Cintra. The reaction against Napoleon had begun. For the first time he was confronted by a united nation; by holding Portugal the English had broken through the Continental blockade. The effects on Europe were instantaneous: Austria armed; in Prussia the national movement under Stein and Scharnhorst progressed; even resistance to the French policy was threatened in Turkey. The edifice which Napoleon had reared so carefully seemed likely to be overthrown and his plans for a world-wide empire destroyed. The situation could not have been more serious. To save the position diplomatic qualities of the highest order as well as decision were required.

The meeting of Napoleon and Alexander at Erfurt was in many ways a masterpiece of intriguing skill, and though Napoleon did not secure all his objects, he at any rate warded off for a time any immediate danger of attack, and was given for a few months a free hand in Spain. The treaty drawn up at Erfurt was very different to that of Tilsit. Alexander being the only ruler who could force Austria and Prussia to keep the peace, was now master of the situation. His vanity and his desire to seize the Danubian Principalities, and perhaps Constantinople, decided him to remain true to his French alliance and to continue his opposition to England. It required a considerable effort on Napoleon's part to give Russia a free hand in Turkey, for he had hoped to involve the Tsar in a war with Austria and Prussia, and thus to keep the Russians away from the Danube. Spain conquered, the overthrow of Austria would follow, and Tolstoi, the Russian ambassador in Paris, was convinced that Napoleon intended eventually to destroy the Russian Empire. For the moment, however, Alexander was content to enjoy the triumph which he had won at Erfurt, while Napoleon, having obtained that respite from attacks by Austria or Prussia which was so necessary for his schemes, hastened to Spain with the intention of ending the war as quickly as possible and of restoring the prestige of the French arms. While in Spain he gave convincing proofs that as a general he was well-nigh invincible, but he did not remain long enough to break the resistance of the Spaniards. In January, 1809, he left Spain and hastened to Paris in order to crush the intrigues of his domestic enemies and to prepare for a campaign against Austria. Stadion, who guided the administration at Vienna, was convinced that Napoleon should be attacked while busy in Spain. Austria was too poor to be able to continue much longer her expensive war preparations, her English allies demanded some action on her part, and a strong national movement within his country made it difficult for the Emperor Francis to avoid hostilities.

Though Austria was vanquished at Wagram and forced to make the humiliating Peace of Vienna in 1809, her stubborn resistance to the French armies, so graphically described in Marbot's Memoirs, fostered the growth of a feeling of nationality in Germany, and encouraged the efforts of all patriotic Germans to compass the overthrow of Napoleon's power.

The course of events in the years 1807, 1808, and 1809 have been somewhat fully traced because these years form, as it were, the hinge of the history of Napoleon. In these years, too, his plans developed, and the objects of his policy were unfolded at Tilsit and Erfurt. During these years the first signs of the gathering together of the forces which ultimately overwhelmed him can be distinctly traced. The patriotic and never-ceasing resistance of Spain, the tenacious opposition of England, the growth of a strong feeling of nationality in Prussia and Austria, the equivocal and suspicious attitude of Russia, were all signals of coming dangers.

Napoleon, however, never allowed any considerations of these danger signals to disturb the line of policy which he had determined to follow. The establishment of a block of dependent states, known as the Confederation of the Rhine, between France on the one hand and Austria and Prussia on the other, seemed to secure him from any further difficulties in Germany, while the successes of his generals in Spain augured well for the eventual subjugation of that country. He was therefore able to turn his full and undivided attention to the complete execution of his Continental system and to the absolute exclusion of England's commerce from Europe. For this purpose he had annexed Holland and the Hanseatic towns, and proceeded to occupy Oldenburg. In this duel with England Napoleon expected to be able to force all Europe to support his policy. "Choose," he said to the Swedish government, "between cannon shot against the English vessels which approach your coasts and the confiscation of their merchandise or an immediate war with France."

Everything depended, in Napoleon's opinion, on carrying out this impossible policy. And the result of Russia's defection from the Continental system was to open the flood gates of a general national movement against the French. On December 31, 1810, Alexander issued an edict modifying his adhesion to the Continental system. Napoleon was furious, and his estimate of the importance of Alexander's action was by no means exaggerated. "It is," he truly asserted in a letter to the Tsar, "a change of system. All Europe so regards it; and already our alliance no longer exists in the opinion of England and of Europe." If Napoleon was convinced that the Continental system was essential for the carrying out of his schemes of empire, he had no other alternative but to declare war on Russia. "Russia's partial abandonment of the Continental system," wrote Professor Seeley, "was not merely a pretext, but the real ground of the war. Napoleon had no alternative between fighting for his system and abandoning the only method open to him of carrying on war against England."

The year 1811 was spent in preparations, 1812 saw the campaign to Moscow with its disastrous failure, 1813 marks the beginning of the War of Liberation by Russia and Prussia, supported by England, and joined in August by Austria. At bay in the centre of Europe, Napoleon's attempts to resist his numerous foes ended in failure, and his defeat at Leipzig forced him to retire to France. His masterly strategy in the early months of 1814 proved unavailing. The allies entered Paris, the first Treaty of Paris was made, the emperor was sent to Elba, and Louis XVIII returned to occupy the throne of his fathers. The escape of Napoleon and the events of the Hundred Days necessitated a fresh campaign and the battle of Waterloo, before Europe could enjoy a feeling of security. The second Treaty of Paris and Napoleon's imprisonment at Saint Helena proved effectual, and closed a period of conquest unequalled in the annals of modern Europe.

To establish a stable government in France and to fix limits which she could not pass were the objects of the allied powers. "If we want a durable and safe peace," said Hardenberg, "as we have so often announced and declared, if France herself sincerely wants such a peace with her neighbours, she must give back to her neighbours the line of defence she has taken from them: to Germany, Alsace, and the fortifications of the Netherlands, the Meuse, Moselle, and Saar. Not till then will France find herself in her true line of defence, with the Vosges and her double line of fortresses from the Meuse to the sea; and not till then will France remain quiet. Let us not lose the moment so favourable to the weal both of Europe and France which now offers for establishing a durable and sure peace." These words implied the belief that Napoleon was France, and that the national resentment felt against the emperor should be visited on the nation. Such a view was inaccurate; France was neither reactionary nor Jacobin. The mass of the French people feared the return of Jacobinism, but had little responsibility for the Hundred Days. Nevertheless, the apathy and indifference of the French people were punished, when the real blame should have fallen on Napoleon and his supporters.

Led astray by a false conception of the power of France and of the weakness of other nations, Napoleon was himself responsible for his overthrow; his fall was specially due to his obstinacy in not realizing that the execution of his anti-English policy was impossible and in ignoring the magnitude of the opposition to France in Europe. Though the war of 1792 was a national war, the effects of the Revolution were essentially cosmopolitan and antinational. Speaking of the growth of German national feeling, Napoleon said: "The dissatisfied souls forgot the benefits they had received individually in their resentment at their being granted by France." The French victories had indeed done a most useful work in breaking down feudalism in old Europe; but in abolishing the old-established forms of local self-government Napoleon evoked a spirit of opposition. The risings in Austria, Germany, and Spain were directed as much against the break with old-established customs as against the uniformity introduced by the French. The outburst and growth of the feeling of nationality were distinctly opposed to the teaching of the French Revolution. French influence had proved destructive to liberty, and hence the Revolution gradually but surely called forth a bitter spirit of opposition. It was before the development of national feeling that Napoleon failed and fell. Indirectly he had given a great impulse to the idea of nationality by his conquests in Germany and Italy, and so the work of the Napoleonic period, apart from the emperor's restorative measures within France, is by no means wholly destructive.

Though the settlement of Europe in 1815 implied the triumph of eighteenth-century principles and of the idea of the balance of power, and though the Congress of Vienna ignored the new principle of nationality, France had in many ways benefited from the constructive work of Napoleon, and before many years were over the memory of one who was perhaps the greatest military genius in ancient or modern times was perpetuated by the growth of the Napoleonic legend.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1830

THE government of the Restoration enabled France to recover from her late wars. Peace brought a marvellous development in industry and commerce, and literature, freed from the tyranny of the empire, began to develop. At first politics continued to absorb men's attention, but as time went on Catholicism became the fashion, and while the monarchy began to look to the past for proofs of its rights, literature sought in the history of past times for its inspiration. Of this romantic revival the seeds in Europe had been sown during the years of the national uprising against Napoleon, and in France itself the ground was well prepared. After 1815 Châteaubriand, Lamennais, and De Maistre wrote without fear of governmental interference, and the rise of the romantic school was illustrated by the beginnings of Guizot, Villemain, Cousin, Thiers, and Mignet. A taste for historical and architectural study rapidly grew, and the middle ages became an object of interest. A new Hôtel de Rambouillet was organized, in which, says Sainte-Beuve, "art was adored with closed doors, a new privilege was sought for in poetry, and a golden chivalry, a middle age of chatelaines, pages, and sponsors, a Christianity of chapels and hermits, was the theme of day dreams." Louis XVIII's government had for a time a chance of establishing the Bourbons firmly on the throne, but having failed to gain the confidence of the country the influence of the popular party rapidly grew, and when Charles X ascended the throne the relations between the liberal element in France and the ultra-royalists were very strained. Reactionary measures had been taken by Louis just before his death. Guizot and Royer-Collard were forbidden to lecture, Châteaubriand was dismissed from office, the liberty of the press was checked, and the Jesuits became predominant in the state.

In spite, however, of its many exaggerations, the reign of Louis XVIII saw an outburst of literature only equalled by that in Louis XIV's reign. It is possible to divide roughly the distinguished men of letters into two classes: First, there was the aristocratic party in literature, the watchword of which was for a time religion, and which included such men as Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Châteaubriand, Alfred de Vigny, Lamennais, Émile Deschamps, and others, while opposed to them were those who held various forms of liberal opinions. This party was inspired not by religion, but by a lofty patriotism. The Voltairean traditions were, as a rule, clung to, the empire was celebrated, while Béranger and Casimir Delavigne were its principal poets, and were supported by Madame de Staël, Paul Louis Courier, and Benjamin Constant.

On Charles X's accession the Villèle ministry endeavoured to continue the reactionary policy, and laws restraining the publication of literature of all kinds and re-establishing primogeniture were passed by the Chamber of Deputies, but rejected by the Peers. The new elections, in which men like Châteaubriand and Guizot took an active part, were followed by the resignation of Villèle, and

Martignac became head of a ministry which for eighteen months inspired the hope that a constitutional government might grow up in France. But the dismissal of the Martignac ministry by Charles X, followed by the issue of the famous Ordonnances, brought the Bourbon monarchy to an end.

The Church played a large part in the history of the restored monarchy. Napoleon had intended "the Pope to be his minister of public worship, the bishops his religious prefects, the parish priests their obedient subordinates." But during the reign of Louis XVIII and Charles X the Papacy entirely recovered its independence, and the bishops had no reason to fear the government. Nothing, of course, could be more favourable to the Romanist party than the royalist reaction which followed the fall of Napoleon, accompanied by the romantic movement in literature and art. The philosophy of the eighteenth century fell into disfavour, and war was practically declared upon toleration and liberty. Encouraged in their crusade by the apparent success which attended their efforts, the ultras attempted "to restore the old order without the liberties of the Gallican Church and with the addition of the Jesuits." Their projects included the seizure of control of education from the university, and the consequent overthrowal of an important portion of Napoleon's edifice of centralization. The fall of Charles X was, as is well known, largely due to the follies of the *parti prêtre.*

In 1830 Charles X fled and Louis Philippe became king. The July revolution had none of the elements of the 1792 movement, or, indeed, of the revolution of 1848, when a powerful section endeavoured to reproduce the Jacobin programme. The position in Europe occupied by France since 1815 was in no wise endangered, and though risings against oppression took place in Spain, Belgium, and Italy, and though the movement in England in favour of reform was strengthened, the government of Louis Philippe came to an understanding with England and quieted foreign susceptibilities by asserting a policy of nonintervention in Italy and Poland. The Restoration had been a triumph of the theory of divine right, and for a time the principle of the "sovereignty of the people" had been sensibly weakened. The liberal opposition, wisely recognising the limits of their powers, confined their efforts to insisting on a generous interpretation of the charter of Louis XVIII. At first their task seemed hopeless before the reactionary influences which were especially prominent in the reign of Charles X. Like the early Stuarts, the restored Bourbons based their absolutism on the alliance of the monarchy with the Church. But Charles X, like the English James II, entirely misunderstood the nature of the problem with which he had to deal, and what the revolution of 1688 was to the Stuarts that of 1830 was to the Bourbons. A new epoch in the history of modern France was opened, the policy of the doctrinaire liberals had triumphed, and while the theory of divine right disappeared, that of the sovereignty of the people was not fully established.

The revolution of 1830 was a compromise; it was like the victory of the Reform Bill in England, a victory of the middle classes. The country accepted the action of Paris, but no enthusiasm was shown. The new government of Louis Philippe, like that of William III, was no longer regarded as of divine origin, but was merely looked upon as a temporary expedient. "The principle of the revolution of July, as of the government derived from it, is not insurrection; it is resistance to the aggressions of authority. France was challenged and defied. She defended herself, and her victory is the victory of rights which had been unworthily outraged." These words of Casimir-Périer accurately describe the situation created by the revolution of 1830 and the accession of Louis Philippe. The new king did not reign by inherent right, but by the will of the people, whose representative he was. Though a constitutional monarchy might be acceptable to the doctrinaire liberals, by the French nation it was by no means regarded with favour. Royalty had suffered a severe blow from which it never recovered, and the monarchy of Louis Philippe remained a compromise which might or might not justify its existence.

The revolution of 1830 was peculiarly a Paris revolution, and the people in the country districts, fearful of a return of revolutionary violence, indorsed the action of the two hundred and nineteen deputies, who had offered the revised charter to the Duke of Orleans. Some men found a comparison between the abdication of Charles X and the fall of James II of England, and hoped that a constitutional monarchy on English lines would be formed. But the French assembly split into groups under the middle-class monarchy of July, and all hope for the establishment of a government by party vanished. Nothing could exceed the cowardice and vacillation of the majority of those concerned in the change of monarchs, and for five years riots frequently broke out, administrative anarchy prevailed in many parts of France, and it seemed at one time as though the country was drifting toward the condition of things in 1792 and 1793.

Having, however, succeeded in checking disorder with the aid of Casimir-Périer, Louis endeavoured in his own way to strengthen his throne. The circumstances of his accession to power forbade the adoption of a strong policy towards internal discontent, and in his foreign policy the king posed as the champion of peace. He has been called "an arbitrary monarch masquerading as a liberal, a conservative disguised as a progressivist." In spite, however, of the contemptible character of the French government, the progress of the country continued to make enormous strides. Continued advances were effected in agriculture and manufactures, the peasants and artisans regarding the revolution of 1830 with indifference. Roads were made, bridges built, canals dug, and no effort was spared to improve the general condition of France. Population increased, the rate of wages was raised, the number of proprietors was largely added to. This continuous prosperity was aided by the excellent laws with regard to the administration of justice and other matters, by the foundation of large schools, and by the organization of primary education. Side by side with this remarkable progress went a splendid development in literature and art which was part of the renaissance begun under the Restoration, but which added considerably to the strength and reputation of the July monarchy.

In all departments of literature and art brilliant examples of conspicuous talent were to be found. History, novels, and poetry were represented by such men as De Tocqueville, Augustin, Thierry, Thiers, Lamartine, Balzac, Châteaubriand, De Maistre, Lamennais, Victor Hugo, De Musset, and Alfred de Vigny, as art and music were by Horace Vernet, Delacroix, Meyerbeer, Rossini, and many others. Under such writers and artists flourished what is known as the romantic movement.

Every department of literature, whether history, poetry, drama, theology, or romance, were adequately represented in the period from the Restoration to the revolution of 1848, and under the monarchy of July every class of society contributed to the literary splendour of the epoch. Not even in the days of privilege were so numerous, so varied, and so talented a band of writers produced. There is no doubt that many of the works of that period had a very considerable influence on the course of politics, and at the same time it must be remembered that it was during the years immediately following the July revolution that the romantic movement reached its culminating point.

The revolution was in itself probably a disaster to France, for it was not followed by the gradual development of a constitutional monarchy, and it tended to check the literary and philosophic movement which was in full swing. Guizot and Thiers took to political life. Barante became an ambassador, and others hitherto interested in literature, natural science, and philosophy adopted political careers. Already, however, these men had become famous and inspired by the romanticists. Thierry and Guizot had done much for the renovation of historical studies, and they were followed by Thiers, De Tocqueville, Michelet, and Lamartine. The belief of Thierry that " history would stamp the nineteenth century for its own, just as philosophy had seized the eighteenth," has been fully borne out by the increased interest taken in the study of history.

In 1820 Thierry, influenced by Les Martyrs of Châteaubriand and by the writings of Sir Walter Scott, wrote his Letters on the History of France, and in 1825 illustrated the methods of the new philosophic school of historians by his History of the Norman Conquest of England. In artistic fashion Thierry inquires what our ancestors were, and what their characteristics. His object was not to find in the history of the middle ages proofs of the rights of the French monarchy: it was rather to explain the growth of the middle classes and to justify their supremacy. In 1834 he wrote with the same object in view Dix Ans d'Études Historiques, but in 1840 his Récits des Temps Mérovingiens, written in support of no fixed theory, gave the world, in place of a dull recital of events, a dramatic and graceful picture of primitive barbarism.

Guizot, published his Histoire du Gouvernement Représentatif in 1821–'22 and his Essais sur l'Histoire de France in 1823, followed in 1827–'28 by L'Histoire de la Révolution d'Angleterre, and in 1828–'30 by his L'Histoire Générale de la Civilisation en France, being a course of lectures to which the whole literary public of Paris flocked. The Villèle ministry had fallen, and after a suspension of nearly ten years Guizot was able to reopen his lecture rooms. His method is one of criticism and dissertation. Only in his English Revolution does he adopt the narrative form. The scientific study of history flourished in his hands, and he not only, like Thierry, inquired "what our ancestors were, but what made them so; what gave rise to the peculiar state of society of the middle ages; and by what causes this state was progressively transformed into what we see around us."

Thiers, like Thierry and Guizot, had an object in his writings, but he was not a philosopher, and in his History of the French Revolution, published between 1823 and

1828, he misrepresented the account of that movement. His history is untrustworthy, for he alters the details and falsifies the facts. His contemporary Mignet, who also wrote an account of the French Revolution which is still read, gives an equally false view of that important period in French history. He omits essential facts and ignores some of the most salient features in the Revolution. "Thiers's portrait flatters the Revolution by altering the details; Mignet's coarser and colourless hand falsifies the outline."

There seems little doubt that the condition of politics when Thiers wrote led him to colour or falsify portions of his history. A writer to the Constitutionnel, together with Mignet and Armand Carrel, he founded the National, which prepared men's minds for the revolution of 1830. On Louis Philippe's accession Thiers was admitted to the Conseil d'État, and later became secretary of state for the finance department, while Mignet for his "enlightened liberalism" was made director of the archives of the foreign department and received the star of the Legion of Honour.

In his History of the Consulate and Empire (1840–'45) Thiers showed himself an enthusiastic if uncritical admirer of Napoleon. In all his writings eloquence and a lucid description of the political and financial condition of France are the features which strike the reader. His work, however, will never rank with that of Thierry, Guizot, or indeed with those of De Tocqueville or Michelet. The ablest member of the Philosophical School, Alexis de Tocqueville published between 1835 and 1839 his Democracy in America, a work of immense interest and value. In it he attempts to ascertain the tendencies of democracy, its political effects, its influence on society, and on all the habits and feelings which go to make up national character. The progress of French society toward democracy had arrested his attention, and as he became convinced of the general irresistible tendency toward equality of condition he was led to visit America to verify his convictions by observing the working of the constitution of the United States.

Almost simultaneously with the investigations of De Tocqueville Michelet was giving to the astonished world of letters his spirited advocacy of the cause of democracy. In no sense a strict follower of the philosophic school, he has been called " the most unbridled of the romanticists," and in spite of his tendency to be so carried away by his enthusiasm as to give a false idea of history, his writings remain as an example of a brilliant style, of a fervid imagination, and of a learning which few of his contemporaries possessed, while his Moyen Age is the greatest of all his historical works, for in it he revived the spirit of the middle ages in a way not done even by Thierry. " To common perception those times are like a distant range of mountains, all melted together into one cloudlike barrier. To M. Michelet they are like the same range on a nearer approach, resolved into its separate mountain masses, with sloping sides overlapping one another and gorges opening between them." Like many of his friends, he hated the clergy and kings, and idolized the Revolution. His History of the Revolution, written between 1847 and 1853, is marked by many defects, and is wanting in impartiality and accuracy. Like many of the historians of his day, he was profoundly affected by the democratic tendencies of the age; like them, his best work was done some years before the revolution of 1848. Under the influence of such men as those already mentioned, the historical side of the romantic movement flourished. A new era in the study of the past was opened, the modern historical method was developed.

In other paths of literature and letters the romantic movement was no less marked. Châteaubriand and Madame de Staël had many followers, and the latter especially had immense influence on the development of a certain style in novel writing marked by picturesque descriptions and tragic surroundings. Alfred de Vigny's Military Servitude and Greatness, Lamartine's Jocelyn, Alfred de Musset's Confessions d'un Enfant du Siècle, were all written in 1835 and 1836, and illustrate some of the peculiar characteristics of the prose writings of the period, while Victor Hugo's Han d'Islande and Gautier's Jeune France display an excess of colour and picturesqueness not found in the works of such authors as George Sand and Balzac. Both these writers exhibit an independence of the romanticists which is refreshing. George Sand, the head of the idealist school, owed much to Châteaubriand, and her early novels are marked by great originality; Balzac, " the apostle of realism," was writing his Human Comedy and giving to the world numerous examples of his incomparable powers. His influence on literature was destined to be immense, though he only wrote for the cultivated and intellectual classes. Till 1848 he and all the leading novelists, such as Alexandre Dumas, were more or less the products of the romantic movement, and with the historians and poets illustrate the extraordinary variety of the epoch. Poetry passed equally readily under the influence of romanticism. Victor Hugo's Odes, written in 1822, are mainly classical, but in 1824 he published Les Orientales, and showed that he had joined the romantic school. The beauty of his poems was unquestioned, and in rapid succession he wrote Les Feuilles d'Automne, Les Chants du Crépuscule, Lès Voix Intérieures, and Les Rayons et les Ombres.

Like Lamartine, Béranger, and Delavigne, Victor Hugo was deeply interested in politics and in sympathy with the lower middle class, and though he erred on the side of a too intense realism he threw open the gates of art, he attacked the classicists and defeated them, and became the idol of the literary and artistic youth of Paris.

Till 1830 Lamartine, a poet "of sentiment and beauty," was under the influence of religious ardour and loyalty to the crown. His religious education, the monarchical traditions of his family, and his studies of Fénelon well fitted him to write poems inspired by hatred of the Revolution and the empire. In direct opposition to the tone of his poetry Béranger wrote his peculiar lyrics. His watchword is *La Patrie*, and patriotism is the central idea of all his writings. While intensely artistic, Béranger wrote for the people, his view being that all, even the most humble, could be taught to appreciate the treasures of the imagination. Brimming over with originality, the songs of Béranger will always live. Like Béranger, Casimir Delavigne also wrote in a spirit of admiration for the Revolution and the empire. In 1824 he wrote two poems expressing the views of *liberal* France, and he celebrated the revolution of 1830 in his famous La Parisienne.

Romanticism, it has been said, was the liberalism of literature. "The greater part of the poets," writes Sainte-Beuve, "gave themselves up without control or restraint to all the instincts of their nature, and also to all the pretensions of their pride, and even to all the follies of their vanity." In spite of its faults romanticism gave to France a school of lyric poets unequalled in any other period of her history.

Théophile Gautier, on the other hand, only cared for art, and disliked politics and the *bourgeois* element. Like Hugo, he did much for the French language by his care for form, while in beauty of imagery he will compare favourably with any of his contemporaries.

Criticism no less than poetry entered upon a new phase, and its principal exponents were Sainte-Beuve and Villemain. Both were affected by the ideas of the romantic school, both had considerable influence upon literature. Sainte-Beuve, whose brilliant criticisms are so well known, had produced in his Tableau de la Poésie Française au Seizième Siècle a work which had enormous influence on the romantic movement, while Villemain, who had studied philosophy in Germany, and who introduced the Hegelian system into France, influenced the men of his generation by his lectures, and especially by the publication in 1826 of his Fragments Philosophiques. Other able prose writers were Courier, who had no sympathy with the empire and little with the Restoration, and Lamennais, who represented the views of the ultramontanes so strenuously that the Papacy disavowed his advocacy.

Failing to secure an alliance between the papal authority and the supremacy of the people, Lamennais became after 1830 an avowed democrat and, with Lacordaire and Montalembert, one of the leading supporters of liberal Catholicism. His liberal contemporary Benjamin Constant opposed the idea of an absolute authority, and, influenced by his experience of the evils of the *ancien régime* of the Revolution and of the empire, regarded government as a necessary evil and advocated the complete independence of the individual. Like many liberals of the day, he desired complete toleration of all religious systems, though he himself belonged to no religious party and was convinced that religion was a sentiment in the heart of man. A friend of Madame de Staël, he had, like her, been exiled by Napoleon. Lamennais throughout his career was always the ardent supporter of some absolute power, but Constant never varied in his dislike of governmental authority.

During the reigns of Louis XVIII, Charles X, and Louis Philippe France was experiencing a social and political reconstruction, and while these eminent writers each in his own way aided in the recovery and development of the country, the period was embellished by the skill of various architects and artists and by the eloquence of several learned divines.

The genius of the painters was exemplified by Ingres, Delacroix, Horace Vernet, Paul Delaroche, and others. While Ingres represented the classicists, Delacroix and his disciples fought the battle for the romantic school. In every department of art, letters, and natural science the renaissance following the Restoration found brilliant exponents. Lacordaire and Montalembert upheld Catholicism against sceptics and the union of democracy with religious theocracy. The eloquence of Lacordaire, indeed, attracted vast crowds to Notre Dame, and in him the romantic school could claim one of the boldest and most impassioned preachers of the day.

A period of such variety, which included a Béranger, a

Balzac, a Michelet, and a Vernet, could not fail to constitute an epoch in the history of European letters. Since the reign of Louis XIV France had enjoyed no such "golden season of art and letters."

From 1830 many of the foremost names in literature are to be found among the politicians of the July monarchy. Thiers, Guizot, Barante, the Duc de Broglie, with many others, took part in affairs during the reign of Louis Philippe. The romantic movement suffered from its connection with the middle-class monarchy, which, having failed to establish parliamentary government on English lines, and having succeeded in raising general disaffection, which was increased by the financial condition of France, and by an agricultural crisis, was ended by the revolution of 1848.

In all departments Louis Philippe's government had shown incompetence. His concessions to the threats of Rome were regarded as the result of weakness, and while not strengthening him with the clerical party, weakened the respect felt for him by the nation. Thiers, whose influence and advice were fatal to Louis Philippe and France, hoped to secure the subservience of the Church. He assisted in dealing a serious blow at secular education, and approved of the occupation of Rome.

But if the attitude of Louis Philippe and his ministers to the Church was a mistaken one, the faults of French foreign policy were no less glaring. Guizot, who had agreed with the subservient attitude adopted toward the clergy, pursued methods in his foreign policy which were nothing less than dishonourable. After the fall, in 1840, of Thiers, whose action in bringing back Napoleon's ashes to France revived the Napoleonic legend, and whose warlike policy had alarmed the king, Guizot became practically the guiding spirit of the government. His eloquence was such that he inspired a confidence for which there was no justification. Having secured the establishment of the July monarchy, he was, like Burke, opposed to any change in the Constitution, and by his obstinate conservatism insured the fall of the Orleanist dynasty. The supporter of constitutionalism and the middle classes, his position resembled that taken up by the Whigs in England after the Reform Bill. "The middle classes," he said, "have no taste for great enterprises. When driven to undertake them by chance, they are uneasy and embarrassed. Responsibility troubles them; they feel out of their element, and, being anxious to return to it, they drive easy bargains."

To Guizot the middle classes represented the most important body in France, and as long as they were contented he never realized the necessity of considering the advisability of introducing reforms in the electoral and parliamentary system. In this failure to realize the necessity of reform Guizot was encouraged by Louis Philippe, and though in 1847 clouds gathered over the political horizon, though the financial situation increased the general disaffection, and though an ominous agitation for parliamentary reform threatened danger to the government, Guizot preserved his optimistic and uncompromising attitude. A reform banquet was forbidden by the authorities to take place on February 22, 1848. Fighting took place in the streets on the 22d and 23d. On the 24th Louis Philippe abdicated and the revolution of 1848 was triumphant.

CHAPTER XIX

THE REVOLUTION OF 1848

THE year 1848 has been called the year of unfulfilled revolutions. Louis Philippe's flight was the signal for the revolutionary tide to set strong against many European dynasties. Though the revolutions which burst out all over Europe came upon the world as a surprise, in France the fall of the monarchy had long been expected.

There was nothing in the reign of the *bourgeois* king to attract the French people; it was unsuited to their genius and temper. Moreover, the monarchy of July always suffered from the fact that it was a compromise. It represented neither the divine right of kings nor the principle of the sovereignty of the people. In England logic in political matters is at a discount, but the French are a logical people and the monarchy of July was illogical. The French, too, have often shown that they would willingly lose even domestic liberty for the sake of glory and national greatness, and they have always appreciated the appearance of splendour in their system of government. But while Louis Philippe's home government was of a mean and sordid character, his foreign policy by its methods and want of success lowered the prestige of France. Consequently the throne had been long shaken, and Louis Philippe's own indecision in the hour of trial rendered his fall certain.

Nothing was more unforeseen by the doctrinaires than the revolution of 1848. They were the heirs of the members of the Constituent Assembly, who had hoped by liberal reforms to check the tide of anarchy, and they were also the heirs of the Girondists. Though Louis XVIII was an admirer of Voltaire, the reactionary influences ran strongly in his reign, and Charles X became the avowed champion of legitimacy and of the rule of priests and nobles. The revolution of 1830 seemed to the constitutionalists to establish a limited and parliamentary monarchy on a permanent basis. For eighteen years Louis Philippe reigned, and was advised by the most cultivated body of men in France. In Guizot and Thiers, in Casimir-Périer, Laffitte, and the Duc de Broglie, the Orleanists possessed some of the best orators of the day—men steeped in constitutional philosophy and admirers of the English constitution, which they profoundly misunderstood.

These doctrinaires failed to secure the support of the artisans, the advocates of legitimacy consistently opposed the citizen king, and thus the monarchy rested not on the broad basis of democracy, but upon the loyalty of the middle class, whose interests were guarded by the small body of theorists who formed, for the most part, the ministries of the reign.

Though the leaders of the Orleanists were themselves honest, corruption was rampant, the traffic in places was scandalous, and with its small constituency—only about two hundred thousand people enjoying the franchise—France became like a close borough, while Louis Philippe, like George III, was " naïvement, consciencieusement corrupteur." The doctrinaires had the same confidence as the Girondists in the last century had in the soundness of their views. But parliamentary management could not destroy the French love of equality, and fine phrases and constitutional maxims did not satisfy a people which had lost confidence in and respect for their king. Guizot's honest though obstinate belief in the strength of the parliamentary system may be said to have given him the doubtful honour of having largely contributed to the overthrow of Louis Philippe's throne.

Nevertheless, though the monarchy of July had ceased to satisfy the French nation, and for some time past had been tottering to its fall, it remains true that France was by no means prepared for a republic. As it was, the Parisian mob forced on events, and a provisional government was formed to carry on the administration of the country. The members of the government at first included Lamartine, Ledru-Rollin, Dupont de l'Eure, Arago, Marie, Garnier-Pagès, and Crémieux, and to these were added shortly afterward, at the wish of some thirty revolutionists who had assembled at the office of the Reforme, Louis Blanc, Flocon, Marrast, and an artisan named Albert. This mixed government thus included members of the *bourgeoisie* like Dupont and socialists like Louis Blanc, and was only held together by the eloquence of Lamartine.

As the country had not declared its opinion upon the late events, the provisional government was not competent to decide between a monarchy and a republic. But events proved too strong for the ministers, and a proclamation was issued stating that "the provisional government wills the republic, under conditions of approval by the people, who will be immediately consulted," and on

February 26th it was declared that "in the name of the French people, monarchy, under every form, is abolished without possibility of return."

The republic thus constituted owed its establishment in great measure to Lamartine's eloquence and honesty. He and his friends undoubtedly desired a republic, and were convinced that that form of government was best suited to the French people. The History of the Girondins, a glorification of republicanism, had an immense influence for a short time, and Frenchmen were carried away by Lamartine's moving rhetoric. "I declare before God and before you," he had said, "that if this day is big with a revolution, I will not conspire for a half revolution, I will conspire, indeed, for none; but I will accept only a republic." He was convinced that a provisional government would be unable to keep down disorder and to carry on the administration. "Republicans, legitimists, socialists, communists, and terrorists," he declared, "however opposed in their ulterior objects, will fling together their violence to overthrow the feeble barrier of a transition government. If anarchy can be subdued, it is by the republic. If communism can be conquered, it is by the republic. If the revolution can be guided, it is by the republic. If blood can be spared, it is by the republic." Lamartine, carried away by his own convictions and believing himself to be singularly free from illusions, made two stupendous mistakes in his calculations. His estimate of the spread of republican doctrines in France was entirely wrong, and his belief that a republic could alone control the socialists and communists proved equally fallacious.

The monarchy had made itself unpopular, but not to the extent imagined by Lamartine, who in the following sentences expressed his own exaggerated opinion of the situation at the beginning of 1848: "A reign of eighteen years by a single man, representing a single class, has accumulated behind it a mass of revolutionary ideas, impatience, resentment, and hatred, which it will be impossible for any new monarchy to satisfy." Though at first the French people, furious at the old king allowing his throne to be so easily overthrown by the Parisians, forgot that they were monarchists at heart and accepted the republic, a reaction was bound to follow. And this reaction brought home to Lamartine his mistake in reviving the revolutionary legend and thinking that a republic would satisfy the extreme sections of Parisian society. The republic of 1848, as a matter of fact, only lasted from February to June. Officially, it existed four years, from 1848 to 1852, but in reality it merely lasted four months. "The revolution," said Proudhon, "had come before its time." He realized clearly that the socialists would endeavour to forward their projects for a social revolution, and that France was not ready to receive their doctrines. He foresaw that though many sections in France were dissatisfied with the government of Louis Philippe, the time had not yet arrived for uniting all Frenchmen in a steadfast desire to set up a republic. "Numerous criticisms of the old society," he said, "had been made, most of them vague, all of them imbued with sentimentality and mysticism, some more philosophic and more reasonable; but from all this chaos of declamatory discussion no light had been struck; the daily press did not occupy itself with the question; the immense majority of readers were indifferent to it."

Proudhon's prophecy was fully borne out. The republic was regarded by the mass of Frenchmen as a temporary expedient, and not, as Lamartine and the republicans conceived it, as a means for bringing about the reconstitution of society. The latter imagined that every man in every class would receive it with enthusiasm, and that every district in France would co-operate with the government in establishing it on a firm foundation.

But the events between February and May undeceived them; Lamartine and the majority of the provisional government had no sympathy with the revolutionists and socialist workingmen represented by Louis Blanc and Albert. To these men a republic meant the overthrow of capital, an immediate social transformation, the abolition of ignorance and misery, the emancipation of the producers. Such utopian ideas and hopes were not shared by many Frenchmen outside Paris, but the extremists, though few in number, were united in aim, and endeavoured to force upon the government their views. At first they were successful, and the provisional government agreed to set up "national workshops" for the unemployed, and empowered Louis Blanc to conduct a commission of inquiry. Supported by the trade societies, he set up at the Luxemburg a "Labour Parlement," where was discussed all problems connected with labour and capital. Then were stirred up the passions of the workingmen, who were assured by their president, Louis Blanc, that the existing social order was iniquitous, and that the time was coming when the labouring classes would be powerful and rich. Thus roused, the members of the Labour Parlement, who numbered nearly forty thousand, became a strong organization, suspicious of the provincial government and ready to support the revolutionary party.

This party, thus relying on the national workshops and the Labour Parlement, was well aware that the mass of public opinion was against it. Universal suffrage had been established, and Lamartine and most of his colleagues, anxious to lay down their authority, had fixed the election for April 9th. The professional agitators at once took alarm. In imitation of the Jacobins of the first Revolution clubs had been formed and revolutionary missions to the provinces organized. From the ranks of the extremists Ledru-Rollin, the minister of the interior, had selected agents who replaced the prefects and subprefects in the departments. Counting on the political apathy of the majority of Frenchmen, the little group of revolutionists hoped to terrorize France, and, as in 1794, to set up a sort of Committee of Public Safety, which, though only representing a very small minority, might, by means of organization, seize hold of the reins of power.

Though the ignorant voters were probably as capable of knowing what was best for their interests as were Barbès, Blanqui, Louis Blanc, and Caussidière, these latter determined to bring about the postponement of the elections. On March 17th a demonstration took place, and representatives of some one hundred and fifty thousand men who had democratic and socialistic sympathies interviewed members of the government, and demanded the postponement of the elections. The ministers, though refusing to yield to dictation, eventually agreed to adjourn the elections to April 23d. A fresh attempt to coerce the government was defeated by the national guards, who represented the middle class, and the elections were held on the day fixed.

Louis Blanc, Blanqui, and Caussidière had failed. Out of the nine hundred members of the new National Assembly the reactionaries had a large majority. Lamartine and those of his colleagues who supported him were easily returned, while the advanced men either suffered defeat at the polls or were returned with difficulty. The meaning of the elections was unmistakably clear. The country was willing to establish a republic based on the sovereignty of the people; it was most anxious to restore order and to put an end to the general feeling of insecurity. The voters had no love of the monarchy, but they feared to attempt a socialistic experiment. A republic controlled by the party of order, by men who could be trusted, was what the French nation wanted, not a republic of socialists.

At the elections the French citizen was a free agent. Unlike the situation in 1814, 1815, and 1870, when France was either threatened with invasion or occupied by foreign armies, in 1848 the French people had no reason to fear any attack from abroad, and had their destinies in their own hands. In 1830 the voters were asked to recognise in the accession of Louis Philippe an accomplished fact: in 1848, however, the voters had it in their power to carry out what policy they preferred. It was quite evident that the mass of Frenchmen desired to secure the safety and stability of the state, the maintenance of order, the furtherance of the welfare of the country, a policy of peace. It was seen that the principle of the "national workshops," weakly assented to by Lamartine in February, was unacceptable to the majority of the French, and the elections proved that the electors wished to defend, not to weaken, the rights of property. Recognising the reactionary character of the Assembly, Louis Blanc and the socialists determined on action.

The government was on May 10th invited to form a "ministry of progress," which should organize co-operative associations on certain lines approved by Blanc. The rejection of this proposal was immediately followed by a protest in which it was stated—that "the promises made on the barricades not having been accomplished, and the Assembly having refused on the 10th of May to form a ministry of labour and progress, we workingmen, delegates at the Luxemburg, have unanimously decided not to take part in the *fête*, so called, of concord."

On May 15th the Chamber was stormed by a mob headed by Albert and Barbès, who attempted to set up a provisional government in place of the National Assembly. The middle class determined to enforce order, supported the government, and the national guards, headed by Lamartine, drove out the rioters. Fearful of a recurrence of the scenes of 1792 and 1793, the *bourgeois* love of order had given overwhelming evidence of its resolve not to allow Jacobin views to prevail, socialism was defeated, and the Assembly had won the day. It only remained to gradually suppress the national workshops, which, in a moment of weakness, Lamartine and his colleagues had allowed to be set up.

The workmen, who either were performing nominal tasks or were working one day in four and receiving half pay on the nonworking days, numbered in May about one hundred thousand. These workmen constituted a serious danger to the existence of order and good government. The Assembly decided to issue a decree on June 21st which put an end to the workshops. Though the experiment had been foolish, the terms offered the men were unjust, and on June 23d an insurrection broke out, with the result that General Cavaignac, minister of war, was appointed dictator and given full powers.

The insurgents fought well for four days, and the regular troops lost nine hundred killed and two thousand wounded. But resistance to the soldiers was hopeless, and the victory of the Assembly was easily assured. The revolution of June, 1848, constitutes one of the turning points in the history of France. It was the first attempt since the days of the Committee of Public Safety to establish the supremacy of Jacobin principles; it was an attempt to force the views of a minority upon the people of France; it was an endeavour to overthrow the republican *régime* and to substitute a despotism as severe as that of Robespierre and Saint-Just. The moderate republicans suffered, though not so severely as the extreme revolutionists. Though Lamartine had refused to accept the red flag, he was unable to secure the confidence of the mass of the nation. He had been one of the principal agents in bringing about the revolution, but, though he had no sympathy with the socialists, he had called up the spectre of 1792 and 1793, which he had great difficulty in laying, and had inspired disorder. To avoid the danger of a reconstruction of society, the newly enfranchised population of France ignored Lamartine and gave the supreme authority to Louis Bonaparte. Very striking is this opposition on the part of the mass of the French people to any attempt to return to Jacobinism or to endanger the stability of existing institutions.

In 1830 the government of Charles X, fearing a recrudescence of the views of 1792, had adopted measures which brought about a revolution and the accession of Louis Philippe. In 1848 France showed unmistakably her opinion of the wisdom of adopting the theories and of imbibing the "deadly political poison" of Jacobinism; in 1871 the communists were relentlessly put down.

The course of events succeeding Cavaignac's triumph is well known. A commission of inquiry into the acts of the provisional government brought to light the chaos which had somewhat naturally existed for a time in the administration. For this state of things the republic most unfairly suffered much discredit. At the same time the Assembly decided not only to support universal suffrage throughout the country, but to give the nation an opportunity of electing the head of the state. On December 10, 1848, Louis Napoleon was elected to the presidency of the French Republic by 5,434,216 out of 7,327,345 votes.

Such an election following within twelve months the establishment of the republic is of importance, as showing unmistakably what were the real views of the French people. For the first time since the revolution of 1789 France had an opportunity of declaring her wishes. In 1848 she had to choose between a socialist experiment based on Jacobin views, a republic built up on communal and departmental institutions, and the peace and prosperity which it was believed was certain to follow from the election of Napoleon Bonaparte to the presidency.

The middle class alone might have preferred not to run the risk of the establishment of an empire, but the peasants were fully resolved to sacrifice everything for the restoration of order. Their hatred of feudalism and their dread of the return of the *ancien régime* had prevented any rising on their part against the Directory; in 1848 they were so dominated by the love of order, they were so permeated with conservatism, that they willingly, with their eyes open and of their own free will, elected Bonaparte. The new president was careful to declare that he represented the principles of the revolution of 1789. Between Jacobinism and the party of reaction stood the greater portion of the French nation, which was always alive to the necessity of political and social stability. Without the consent of the majority of the French people the Hundred Days and the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 had been brought about. The popular voice had now asserted itself in favour of a powerful executive. In 1852 it willingly accepted the second empire, and thus, as De Tocqueville foresaw, universal suffrage was immediately followed by the establishment of an arbitrary monarchical government.

CHAPTER XX

THE NAPOLEONIC LEGEND AND THE SECOND EMPIRE

AT the close of 1851 a *coup d'état* placed Louis Napoleon in possession of the government and a plebiscite conferred the presidency on him for ten years. On December 2, 1852, a second plebiscite having testified to a strong feeling throughout France in favour of the rule of one man, the president was proclaimed emperor as Napoleon III.

These plebiscites fully justified that conception of his position which Napoleon had early formed. The Restoration merely represented the triumph of the nobles; the monarchy of July, that of the middle classes; the republic of 1848, an attempt to return to the doctrines of 1793. He aimed at representing the nation as a whole. Universal suffrage had resulted in the government being conferred on Louis Napoleon, who therewith regarded himself as justified in establishing his own authority and in transforming the government into a constitutional monarchy.

His success in attaining to the supreme power was due to many causes, chief among which must be placed the remarkable growth of the Napoleonic legend, attributing to the first emperor a policy which he probably never considered, and assigning to him intentions by which he was never actuated.

It was forgotten that the Restoration had come as an immense relief to a people exhausted after a period of war following a revolution and lasting some twenty-three years. It was also forgotten that the great outburst in literature, art, and natural science known as the Romantic Revival was due to the fall of Napoleon, and the close of an epoch which had brought France defeat, foreign invasion, and loss of territory. Till the Memorial of Saint Helena was sent forth by Las Casas Frenchmen who had not served in the army looked back with aversion to the military despotism of the empire. But the imprisonment of the emperor on Saint Helena and the account of his captivity roused the sympathy of the French nation, and the Napoleonic legend was born.

By bringing to France the emperor's ashes Louis Philippe accentuated the growing admiration for and sympathy with the *régime* of the great emperor, and the regard for his memory increased. The revival of the legend was encouraged by such writers as Béranger and Thiers. The ballads of the former became immensely popular; "the little corporal with his gray military coat" became a well-known saying; while the histories of Thiers, unintentionally, no doubt, caused the name of Napoleon I to become so endeared to the masses that the first use the peasants made of the grant of universal suffrage was to elect Louis Napoleon dictator. For the establishment of the second empire Thiers was as responsible as any one man.

Thiers was essentially a representative of modern France, and no one was a greater admirer of the revolution of 1789 and of the traditional foreign policy of France as pursued by the Convention and the Directory. He believed that France was and should remain the first country in Europe, and was convinced that her colonial and other failures were due to the absence of statesmen. Provided she could find statesmen like Chatham or Frederick the Great, he believed France would regain the position she held in the world before the Seven Years' War. To him Henry IV and Napoleon as First Consul embodied those qualities which he regarded as essential for recovering for France her lost prestige. He saw that the revolution of 1789 constituted a distinct breach with the past, and he recognised that the Napoleonic institutions had outlived the storms of the War of Liberation, the Restoration, and the revolution of 1830. He therefore was deeply anxious that these institutions should not be disturbed and that France should follow her ancient principles of foreign policy. In his History of the Consulate and the Empire he did much to develop an idolatry for a man who had aroused among the French people a passion for military glory and who had subordinated all institutions to the welfare of the army. Till 1830 the admiration of Napoleon did not assert itself, but the writings of Thiers revived the passion for a man " who had shed the blood of his countrymen like water, who had extinguished their liberties, who had dwarfed their literature, and made France an intellectual desert."

Louis Napoleon had himself taken advantage of the growing feeling among the peasants in favour of a Napoleonic *régime*, and had in 1840 published his Idées Napoléoniennes, in which he asserted that had Napoleon I lived he would have gradually modified his centralized despotism and returned to the ideas of the revolution of 1789.

This view that Napoleon's centralized system was only a temporary expedient necessitated by the anarchy and chaos brought about by the Directory readily found favour with Frenchmen, and especially with the peasant class. This class had gained by the revolution of 1789, and, being in full possession of its lands, dreaded any disturbance, and was willing to sacrifice political liberty for the sake of freedom from anxiety with regard to the tenure of its property. Napoleon I had owed his success in great measure to the fact that he understood the needs of the nation.

As the reconstructor of France he lived in the minds of the peasants; he gave them the administrative system suited to their temperament, and they repaid him by forgetting his despotism, his taxes, and his overweening ambition, and looked back on the days of his rule with envy. Of the Napoleonic reorganization Mr. Bodley says: "It is not perfect—no human work is; but admirably suited to the French temperament is the organization which, created in less than a decade amid the alarms of war, has not only performed its functions for three generations, but stands erect as the framework to keep French society together amid the fever of insurrection or the more lingering disorder of parliamentary anarchy, just as though it owed its stability to the growth of ages." *

The tradition of Napoleon's achievements had in 1848 quite obliterated the memory of the bloodshed caused by his wars, while the legend of the splendour of the empire stood in striking contrast to the middle-class monarchy of Louis Philippe and its materialist ambitions.

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* France, by J. S. E. Bodley, vol. i, p. 109.

In 1848 and the following years, however, the peasantry had no desire for martial glory; they simply desired to be protected against socialism, and they resented the action of the monarchist majority in the National Assembly in repudiating on May 31, 1850, the principle of universal suffrage. Louis Napoleon owed his position as president to the votes of the people, and the monarchist majority had also been elected under the same system. The monarchists having resolved to do away with the work of the revolutionary democrats and to overthrow the president, had disfranchised three million electors, and by so doing had ruined all their prospects.

Amid conflicting interests and factions the president was able to appeal with effect to the memory of the great Napoleon. The removal of the general sense of insecurity and the firm establishment of a government which would check faction and put down disorder with a firm hand was demanded by the mass of the nation. In a speech on October 2, 1852, Louis Napoleon clearly described the situation and defined his aims.

In it he shows that he fully appreciated the fact that he owed his position to the divisions among his opponents and to the general expectation that, like his uncle, Napoleon I, he would save society from anarchy and chaos.

The people, he declared, "know that in 1852 society was rushing to its ruin, because every party was consoling itself beforehand for the universal shipwreck by the hope of planting its flag on any *débris* that might float to the surface. . . . To forward the welfare of the country it is not necessary to apply new systems, but to give, above all, confidence in the present, security for the future. . . .

That is how France seems to wish to return to the empire. . . . In à spirit of mistrust certain people say, The empire is war. I say, The empire is peace!" *

In these words, Louis Napoleon endeavoured with success to impress upon France the view already alluded to, that the great emperor only used despotism as a temporary expedient, and intended, as soon as his political system was established, to form a constitutional government, in which liberty should be fully enjoyed by the press and by all Frenchmen, and further, that he, the president, intended to develop this policy, to preserve peace, and to favour industrial progress.

The character of Napoleon III is one of the most complex in modern French history. Kindness, generosity, gratitude, were all found in him; he was aware of the needs of the world and of the national aspirations of France. He had long been a private citizen, and he alone of French politicians had a practical knowledge of foreign countries. Much that he did was beneficial to Europe and to France. His wish for the overthrow of the Austrians in Italy, his liberal commercial ideas, his opposition to the Jesuits, all were parts of a policy to be expected from a man who had seen much of the world. At the same time it is undoubted that he was a dreamer and idealist, with much of the fatalist in his composition. He did not shrink from bloodshed in 1852, and his enemies assert that he never realized the difference between right and wrong. He showed infinite patience and perseverance in carrying out his ideas, and throughout his reign he endeavoured to shape the course of history and to direct the course of the European powers.

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* Quoted by S. Lowes Dickinson in Revolution and Reaction in France, p. 226.

He had nothing of the political genius of Mirabeau, he had not the determination of Napoleon I.

It has been said that there was in him "a strange mixture of imperialistic traditions, and the recollections of a carbonari of scientific pursuits and English experiences, newspaper culture, and an antipathy, half plebeian, half aristocratic, to the prosiness of the *bourgeois* spirit which he found incorporated in the July monarchy."

The nation, which had seized the reins of power in June, 1848, had placed him at the head of affairs in December, 1851, and a year later supported his adoption of the imperial title. In his dislike of the *bourgeoisie* and the Orleanists he represented the views of the greater part of the nation, and, like it, he was weary of the volume of eloquence which was poured forth in the French Chambers. Thus supported by the French people, he formed the theory of a democratic dictatorship which would give to the nation the reforms which it desired, and he determined to establish a government based on equality and one which would lessen the power in the assembly of the plutocratic *bourgeoisie*.

It was therefore as a democratic chief, appointed to suppress all attempts to revive Jacobinism on the one hand, and on the other to check the projects of doctrinaires and to substitute authority for so-called liberty, that Louis Napoleon entered upon his duties as emperor. Before his overthrow at the battle of Sedan he had slowly and gradually effected changes in the constitution all in the direction of parliamentary government, and thus had carried out what he always conceived to be the policy of Napoleon I.

The fear and hatred of anarchy and the dread of any return to the *ancien régime* were thus the strongest forces which built up the empire. The name of Bonaparte was a guarantee that there should be no return to the *ancien régime*, and that all anarchy should cease. "All the memories," says Baron Pierre de Courbetin, "in France and Europe of the great epic of the first empire were suddenly revived and illuminated by the appearance of Napoleon's nephew in the arena of politics." The socialists of 1848 had threatened the security of property, and had roused universal apprehension among all French proprietors, large and small. These had united in a common aim and determination to save their property from present and prospective attacks. This union of the propertied classes, which included the peasants as well as the gentry, came as a staggering blow to the endeavour of the revolutionists to enforce their will on France. When their next attempt was made, in 1871, they ostensibly gave up their policy of forcing their will upon the peasants, and adopted the cry of the emancipation of the large towns from the influence of the country districts.

Another source of strength to Napoleon's empire was the well-merited unpopularity of the Assembly. Since 1830 the doctrinaire liberals had habitually indulged in lengthy debates, and, though no doubt many wise words were uttered, the only result was the fall of the monarchy of Louis Philippe. With the revolution of 1848 the parliamentary *régime* fell into great discredit, and though Napoleon, as president, was opposed in the Assembly by men who were perhaps the most cultivated in France, he had no difficulty in taking advantage of the unpopularity of the Assembly and founding a system of "enlightened despotism."

A third source of strength of his empire was the support of the Church. The Catholic vote was all-important for Napoleon III, and the clergy saw in his accession to power an opportunity of securing a firmer hold upon education, a reform of the marriage laws, and facilities for opposing the growth of scepticism. No sooner was he installed as emperor than he justified the adhesion of the clergy to his throne by aiding Pius IX to re-establish himself in Rome and to recover from the effects of the late revolution. The Pope restored, the Catholics were definitely won over to his cause, and Napoleon was able till the outbreak of the Crimean War to give his country that peace which was the surest foundation of his unstable dynasty. Though by the part taken by the French in the Russian war Napoleon gained the friendship of England and was able to pose as the champion of European interests, the second decade of his reign was destined to see the power of France shaken by the policy adopted toward the Italian struggle for unification, and overthrown by the late appreciation of the determination of Germany, led by Prussia, to achieve national unity.

In a practical way he endeavoured throughout his reign to carry out many of the schemes of the revolutionists of 1789, but he had no sympathy with the views of the Jacobins of 1793, or with those of their successors, the socialists.

Unfortunately for his reputation, the changes in the machinery of government and most of his social and economic reforms came in the latter part of his reign, and by no means compensated for the repressive measures which characterized the early years of his government. His forcible seizure of the "reins of office," only effected at the cost of many lives and accompanied by imprisonment and transportation, had led naturally to the growth of a fierce and bitter opposition.

The shadow of the *coup d'état* darkened the whole of his reign, and hampered his projects for the general well-being of his subjects and forced him into a line of policy from which he found it difficult to deviate. Till 1868 the freedom of the press was restricted, though it is not easy to sympathize with the journalists of the second empire, when one sees the way in which liberty of the press is interpreted at the present day. Till 1860 the Legislature was allowed little independence, and in 1858 Orsini's attempt to murder Napoleon led to the renewal of the policy of proscription. Circumstances had thus prevented the emperor before 1860 from posing as the true interpreter of the wishes of the great Napoleon, and the law of 1858, coupled with "the systematic manipulation of the elections," gave some justification for the views of the opposition that he was "nothing but an adventurer sustaining by coercion tempered with hypocrisy the position he had won by crime." *

Till 1860 the position of the emperor was on the whole a strong one. The people were still grateful for their rescue from the hands of the socialists, and the events of the Crimean War shed a lustre over the acts of the government. But with the year 1860 the power of Napoleon began steadily to decrease, till in 1870 the edifice of imperialism which he had so carefully reared was honeycombed in all directions. The Italian War of 1859 proved the first blow to the Napoleonic system. The emperor had made magnificent promises to Victor Emmanuel, and had in May, 1859, engaged to emancipate Italy as far as the Adriatic. But the victories of Magenta and Solferino in June were suddenly followed by the return of Napoleon to Paris and by the Treaty of Villafranca, in November, between Austria and France.

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* Revolution and Reaction in Modern France, by S. L. Dickinson, p. 236.

The promises made to the Italians remained unfulfilled, the Adriatic was not reached, and Venetia remained in the hands of Francis Joseph. The invasions of Sicily, Naples, and the Roman Campagna by the Italians, and the French claim to Savoy and Nice in 1860 destroyed all the prestige enjoyed by Napoleon in Europe. He was known to be secretly encouraging the Italians, and the great powers realized that in France there existed a force dangerous to the peace of Europe. His advocacy of Italian unity had involved him in difficulties with the Papacy, and in order to extricate himself he advised Pius IX to yield the Romagna. The French Catholics no less than the Italian supporters of the Pope were furious, and Napoleon found that one result of his Italian policy was the alienation of a large and influential portion of his French subjects.

The attacks of the French Catholics on the government produced repressive measures, and the liberal malcontents hastened to enrol the Church in the campaign against the emperor, which continued till Sedan.

Napoleon had the misfortune, too, about the same time, to irritate the industrial interests in France by his commercial treaty with England, which, concluded in January, 1860, recalled the one made by Vergennes in 1786. This treaty imposed on the nation free-trade doctrines in place of the protectionist policy which had been adhered to almost uninterruptedly since the days of Colbert. Attacked by the economic revolution, the cotton spinners in the northern departments showed no desire to support an autocracy which had threatened their interests. Thus Napoleon in 1860 had estranged one half of the nation through the contest about the temporal power of the Papacy, and at the same time by inflicting sufferings on a considerable section of his subjects by his semi-adoption of free-trade views had stirred up another cause of discontent.

Criticisms of the enlightened despotism under which France was ruled were written in a violent tone, and Napoleon, finding the nation unappreciative of his liberal commercial policy, issued, on November 24, 1860, with the advice of Morny, a decree granting to the legislative body the right of public discussion and the right to move an address in answer to the speech from the throne.

Publicity of debate, a more effective control of the budget, and the right to discuss freely the policy of the emperor were rights the importance of which cannot be overestimated. These concessions restored what had been abolished in 1851, they implied a confidence in the nation, and the policy which dictated them has been described as a "*coup d'état* born of the solitary meditations of the emperor." Thus by his Italian enterprise, his commercial policy, and his publication of the decree of November 24th Napoleon had begun to justify the saying that he was "a man of programmes, postures, and reforms."

During the ten years from 1860 to 1870 Napoleon had time and opportunity to gradually develop a constitutional monarchy. But he lacked the capacity of putting his plans into execution, and played into the hands of his opponents.

The opposition, in spite of all his efforts, steadily grew, and after the Italian War was joined by the Church, furious at the independence of Italy and opposed to the modern conception of toleration and free thought. "The first Napoleon," it is said, "had created the Ultramontane Church; and it was his successor who had to meet its open declaration of war."

To these various lay and clerical elements, moved by different impulses and aiming at different objects, but united in common hostility to the emperor, the accession of the socialists was a doubtful gain.

From 1868 the socialists, like the early Jacobins, began to spread their propaganda throughout France. The "International" was to the socialists what the Jacobin Club was to the revolutionists of 1793—a centre to which societies might be affiliated and from which the party of revolutionary socialism might issue its orders and organize its adherents. The artisans, disappointed at the failure of their efforts in 1848, and with no confidence in the empire, were easily conquered by the socialists, and resolved on the first opportunity to complete the work in which they were interrupted by the decision of the electors, in May, 1848, to suppress Jacobinism. The elections of 1863 had showed that, though the country districts were still loyal to the emperor, the towns were discontented, and in 1864 Thiers had clearly indicated in a speech the reasons of their discontent. Universal suffrage, he pointed out, was, owing to governmental threats and bribery, inoperative, and he showed how the press was gagged and the people at the mercy of the police. The cure for these evils, in his opinion, was the establishment of ministerial responsibility.

The emperor's principal minister was now Rouher, who since Morny's death was all-powerful and styled the vice-emperor. He was not a statesman, though clever and eloquent. He spoke of the doctrine of ministerial responsibility as "a superannuated constitutional fiction," and never succeeded in gaining the confidence of the country. In 1864 the struggle between the emperor and his Ultramontane subjects was renewed, owing to the refusal of the government to allow the priests to read from the pulpits the syllabus of Pius IX, in which was denounced "all doctrines based upon national sovereignty, universal suffrage, and liberty of commerce."

While thus opposed by the liberals, the Catholic clergy, and the workingmen the Austro-Prussian War took place, and the opposition declared that Sadowa was a humiliation for the French nation. The close of the Continental struggle to the advantage of Prussia was coincident with the tragedy in Mexico and the attack by Garibaldi on the pontifical states.

As the prestige of the empire declined under these successive shocks the elections of 1869 were held, and revealed the fact that the Government stood on the edge of a precipice. The emperor himself recognised the necessity of bowing to public opinion and dismissing his ministry. On December 27, 1869, he wrote his celebrated letter to Émile Ollivier, in which he invited him to form a ministry composed of men "fully representative of the majority in the Chamber." Napoleon thus indicated his determination to rule as a constitutional monarch, and his desire to allay the uneasiness of the country and the anarchy which had spread from the Chamber to the streets of Paris.

His tenure of unlimited power, enjoyed for some eighteen years, was now over, but his resolution to act constitutionally came too late. "Experience teaches us," says De Tocqueville, "that the most dangerous moment for a bad government is that in which it begins to reform."

On May 6, 1870, the people were asked to approve of the liberal reforms which the emperor had introduced into the constitution, and in the *plebiscite* that was taken it appeared that a large majority had confidence in the emperor. Encouraged by this victory, Napoleon seems to have been persuaded that military successes would restore his authority. The choice lay between war and revolution.

The imminence of a quarrel with Germany had been for some years recognised; the train had been long laid, and only a spark was required to set it alight. The question of the Hohenzollern candidature to the throne of Spain was no sooner raised than an explosion became inevitable. The immediate cause of the fall of the second empire was therefore not due to the growth of a liberal party, nor to the opposition of the Church, nor to the new development of Jacobin principles.

In domestic matters the emperor had endeavoured, in accordance with his convictions, to do all in his power to ameliorate the condition of the lower orders, and in 1870 France found itself with a liberal ministry. But in his foreign policy he had thrown aside all his promises of peace; he had made no attempt to vindicate his assertion that Napoleon I intended to give France a period of tranquility; he had, on the contrary, involved the country in many wars. The part taken by France in the Crimean War may or may not be justified, but the motives which led the emperor to interfere in Italy against Austria are open to criticism, and the expedition to Mexico is indefensible. In fact, his reign, so far from being one of peace, was one of war, from which France gained little. Moreover, the whole course of French foreign policy from the close of the Italian War to the opening of the Franco-Prussian War was one tissue of blunders.

Napoleon III had failed to carry out his solemn promises of peace, and his wars contrasted badly with those of his uncle. His failure abroad only increased the bitterness of the opposition, while the inefficient military preparations at home under incapable administrators and dishonest subordinates led by sure steps to the catastrophe at Sedan, which, like Leipzig, proved fatal to the Napoleonic dynasty.

Though unfortunate in the circumstances connected with the *coup d'état*, the second empire owed its origin to the disunion existing among the monarchists, the republicans, and the democrats. This disunion was certain to lead to anarchy, and the nation was justified in giving itself a dictator. Its choice of Louis Napoleon was due to the extraordinary development of the Napoleonic legend, the strength of which lay in the undoubted fact that Napoleon I had reconstructed French society on a permanent basis and had saved France from a complete return to chaos and barbarism.

Security of property and the preservation of order has been, and is, the watchword of the mass of the French people. The memory of Jacobin excesses in 1793–'94 and of Jacobin attempts to seize power in 1848 was fresh in the minds of the law-abiding and industrious majority of the French people.

Bearing this in mind, the rise of Napoleon III seems not only natural, but, under the circumstances, inevitable. The disappearance of the Napoleonic legend beneath the ruins of the political and social fabric of the second empire proved, however, to be only temporary, and the recrudescence of that legend remains a curious testimony to the love of order so deeply imprinted on the minds of the French peasants.

CHAPTER XXI

THE COMMUNE AND AFTER

THOUGH Sedan proved fatal to the empire already weakened from within, there is nothing to show that the country as a whole desired a return to republican government. Symptoms no doubt there were of discontent with the emperor's home and foreign policy, but the opposition was confined to certain sections. The war, however, precipitated matters and left the country without a government. Had the monarchical parties united on some definite policy France might now be under a monarchy, but the inability of the royalists to decide upon a candidate was necessarily followed by the establishment of a republic.

The immediate effect of the defeat of Sedan was to stir up the Paris mob to overthrow the Assembly. This done, a republic was proclaimed, and a government of national defence was formed, with General Trochu as its president.

The principal work of the government of September 4th was to organize resistance to the Prussians and to defend Paris, which from September 16, 1870, to January 28, 1871, was besieged by the enemy. In most countries at such a crisis in their history the external danger would have produced union. But the contrary happened in

Paris. Instead of showing a patriotic opposition to the foe, the Parisian socialists did all in their power to hamper the government. Insurrections were organized with the object of overthrowing the men at the head of affairs, and in October and January it was only by the assistance of the troops that the social democrats were defeated and dispersed.

In 1792–'93, when France was threatened by foreign invasion, united action was followed by the retreat of the enemy; in 1870 and 1871, however, the descendants of the men who had defended France against Brunswick busied themselves, not in resisting the Prussians, but in plotting against the Government of National Defence.

On January 28, 1871, an armistice was concluded, elections were held all over France, and on February 12th the new Assembly met at Bordeaux, under the presidency of Grévy. In the elections the nation showed its horror of anarchy and returned a majority of reactionists who were favourable to peace but hostile to Paris and democratic socialism. As in 1848, universal suffrage had resulted in the election of men opposed to revolutionary schemes. For, though Paris returned some thirty socialists, revolution no less than republicanism was unpopular in the country, and the Orleanists and Legitimists had for a time considerable support. Thiers was placed at the head of the new government, which included Jules Favre, Simon, and Dufaure, and peace was signed with Germany. On March 10th the Assembly was dissolved, and it was agreed that it should meet again on March 20th, at Versailles. In the meantime important events took place in Paris, where the party of the social democrats had been gaining strength.

The teaching of Marx, formulated in his Manifesto of the Communist League in 1847, had permeated the ranks of the French artisans, who, disappointed at their defeat in 1848, still hoped to carry out a communistic revolution. In 1864 an International Association had been formed which adopted socialistic views, and endeavoured to bring under one organization the labourers of different countries. In France the International became in the latter days of the empire the centre of revolutionary socialism, and of this movement Paris became the centre. It opposed the emperor consistently and bitterly, and when the war of 1870 broke out and the French army suffered defeat the communists in Paris prepared to take advantage of the situation to further their own ends. In 1356, during a similar crisis, Étienne Marcel, at the head of the Parisians, had endeavoured to head a movement at first patriotic, but which degenerated later into an attempt of Paris to lead France. During the religious wars in France in the sixteenth century Paris had taken advantage of the position of affairs and developed democratic tendencies and a power of organization which the Jacobins of 1794 might have envied, and a few years later she cast aside all thought of patriotism, and, in order to keep Henry IV from the throne, allied closely with Spain. Such turbulent and unpatriotic conduct was by no means an exception in the history of Paris, for during the Fronde, when the foe was again at her gates, she showed no care for the national interests. Louis XIV punished her by building Versailles, but his successors only found that Paris was as apt as ever to become unmanageable, and during the Revolution she again came to the front. At that crisis in her history patriotism and care for French interests were made the justification for the September massacres and the innumerable crimes which followed. Always unruly, Paris has since the Revolution guided in the main the destinies of France. But there is a limit beyond which she has not been able to go, and the events of 1848 and 1871 made it clear what that limit was.

Democracy may apparently be supreme in France, but to the provinces democracy has one, to the Parisians another meaning. And it was this distinction between the provincial and Parisian view which was clearly brought out in 1871. The extreme democrats had learned from the events of 1848 that the provinces were opposed to the adoption of their principles, and their failure in 1848 had forced them to modify their political plans and to recognise the difficulty of imposing the will of a small minority upon the majority of Frenchmen. They therefore gave up the idea held in 1848, and so successfully carried out in 1793, of organizing all France by deputies on mission and a network of affiliated clubs under a central body in Paris. Instead, they fell back on the plan of emancipating the great towns from the influence of the country and making them autonomous, and by this policy trusted to the political activity in the towns and the apathy in the provinces to enforce their will on France.

Such an idea, if held during the French Revolution, would have been regarded as rank treason, but in 1871 the descendants of the Jacobins had to face the unpleasant fact that universal suffrage had placed a serious obstacle in the way of the realization of their plans. Therefore, when on March 18, 1871, a revolution took place in Paris it was directed as much against the Napoleonic system of centralization as against the government. Paris, it was asserted, so far from governing France, was, like the other great towns, controlled by the country. She no doubt makes the revolutions, but, it was argued, the country at once perverts them, as in 1848.

The position taken by the communists represented a complete *volte-face* from that taken up by the first Jacobins. During the period of the French Revolution the Committee of Public Safety, aided by the Jacobin Club, had adopted Louis XIV's system of centralization, and by very elaborate methods had controlled France until the misgovernment of the Directory brought Napoleon to the head of affairs. In 1871 they became "the apostles of local autonomy" and at the same time made special claims for Paris in the manifesto of the commune published on April 19th. "Paris," it stated, "reserves to herself to operate, according to her own ideas, those administrative and economic reforms that are demanded by her population; to create institutions suitable to develop and propagate instruction, production, exchange, and credit; and to 'universalize' authority and property according to the necessities of the moment, the wishes of those who are interested, and the data furnished by experience."

Had such a scheme been carried out France would again have fallen under the control of the Parisian democrats, who never seem to have understood the real condition of the provinces. Nothing, however, was more suspected and dreaded than the Jacobin policy, even though it professed, as in 1792 and the following years, to bring to the people liberty. Beneath the kid glove of Jacobinical liberty was concealed the iron hand of Parisian domination and a central despotism. Hence it came about that the "retrograde" provinces never harboured for a moment the thought of accepting the "progressive" offers of Paris, Lyons, Bordeaux, and other "advanced" cities. But before the National Assembly could establish its authority the commune in Paris had to be suppressed, and for the moment Paris was determined to establish her autonomy and to hold the city against all comers. The removal of the Assembly from Bordeaux to Versailles and the attempt of the government to enforce the payment of rent and other obligations had aggravated the situation, but though negotiations were opened with the communists in the hopes that a *modus vivendi* might be arrived at, it soon became evident that compromise was impossible.

The leaders of the insurrectionary movement endeavoured to organize a government of their own, elected a Municipal Council on March 28th, and in May appointed a Committee of Public Safety. This policy brought into strong relief the conflicting tendencies existing among the communists. A minority was opposed to the formation of a Committee of Public Safety on the ground that it implied a dictatorship, while the majority, anxious to return to the traditions of 1793 and 1794, supported the establishment of the committee with the hope that it would make Paris mistress of France and would inaugurate the triumph of the revolutionary party. Other signs of dissension soon appeared, and such men as Cluseret, Jourde, Delescluze, and Grousset, while attempting to govern energetically, had no confidence in each other, and only agreed in advocating a policy of incendiarism and murder when attacked by the Versailles troops. No special competence was shown by the leaders in the difficult task of governing Paris. "In less than a fortnight," is the evidence of Grousset himself, "conflicts of every kind had arisen," while it was asserted after a week's trial that the Committee of Public Safety was "an obstacle instead of a stimulus."

The commune during the short period of its existence did indeed attempt to carry out a part of its socialistic programme, but failure attended all its efforts. The war with the Versailles government had begun on April 2d, and on May 21st the Versaillese entered Paris. After eight days of sanguinary street fighting Paris was with difficulty won. During the struggle the communists murdered in cold blood the archbishop and more than sixty other persons, and fired the Tuileries, the Palais Royal, and other buildings, including several churches and theatres. It is said that the government had to deal with eleven thousand prisoners, and the struggle ended with executions, transportations, and imprisonments.

Though the commune was suppressed, Paris had suffered terribly, and the antagonism between the country and the great towns was increased. It was impossible, at a time when the organization of the army had not been carried out, when the finances had not been placed on a sound basis, when the German army of occupation was still within the French borders, for the country to discuss the proposals of the Paris commune. A minority had, as in 1793 and 1848, endeavoured to impose its will on the nation and to insist on far-reaching changes, which, however feasible or desirable, were not practicable in 1871. On their merits some of the ideas of the socialists deserve attention, but the incompetence shown by their leaders in the work of government did not augur well for the success of their projects, which were overthrown when the Versaillese occupied Paris.

PEDAGOGICAL LIBRARY

As in 1848, so again in 1871, the country population had united with the *bourgeoisie* of the towns and declared against the incoherent, unpractical, and undisciplined forces of socialism. Universal suffrage having again saved the state from total shipwreck, it became necessary to establish the republic on a stable basis and to give France a government which should preserve order, restore the finances, and reorganize the army.

The principles of the commune were, in the words of M. Seignobos, "the exact reverse of the [centralized] system hitherto demanded by the French revolutionary party, following the tradition of the Convention." The suppression of the commune was followed by the establishment of the third republic, with Thiers as president. But the latter days of this ambitious though patriotic statesman were full of disappointment to him and his followers. On May 24, 1873, he resigned, and Marshal MacMahon was proclaimed President of the French Republic. An era of "reactionary incompetence" was opened, and till 1875 intrigues abounded and almost culminated in a restoration. In 1875, however, "there was established the political constitution which France had vainly striven to give herself since 1789. There are now in France certain political principles which no party contests any longer—the sovereignty of the nation exercised by the Chamber, universal suffrage, liberty of the press, the jury, the right of public meeting. Under this constitution was preserved the social organization created by the Revolution and the administrative machinery created by Napoleon."

As in 1848, so in 1871, the French people had refused to be led away by the revolutionary propaganda. In 1852 they had set up the second empire as a barrier against anarchy, in 1875 a constitution was given France, and it was hoped that peace and prosperity were assured under this constitution. Thiers had been overthrown because it was thought by the conservative party that the time had come to restore limited monarchy to France. The fall of Thiers had, however, failed in its object. The monarchy was not restored, and with the promulgation of the constitution of 1875 the republicans had gained a great victory. It was not, however, till about 1879 that the intrigues for a monarchical restoration ceased. Till then the monarchists were encouraged by the friction between the two chambers to hope that public opinion would declare itself on their side.

It was believed, and with some show of reason, that the republic owed its establishment not to any attachment felt by the nation for democratic institutions, but merely to the impossibility in 1871 of fixing upon any other form of government. At the same time the religious character of the majority of Frenchmen in the provinces was well known, and the monarchists looked, and not in vain, to the Roman Church for support in the campaign which they carried on against the liberals. France was thus forced into two distinct camps, for, as the monarchists organized their forces, so the liberals were compelled to call the extreme democrats to their aid and to take up an attitude of hostility to the Church.

The struggle between the advocates of progress and those of reaction went on fiercely. Dufaure, a moderate man of republican views, failed to retain power for more than a few months, and his successor, Jules Simon, was suddenly dismissed from office on May 16, 1877, by the president of the republic, Marshal MacMahon.

A crisis of supreme importance had occurred, and a determined effort was made to vindicate the monarchic principle. MacMahon dissolved the Chamber and appealed to the country, urging the danger of republican doctrines. Though the monarchist party was strong, and had in the Comte de Paris a candidate for the throne, the majority of Frenchmen showed no desire to restore the throne. After an uneasy period MacMahon recognised that the country was republican and did not indorse his forcible policy. He therefore resigned in 1879, and was succeeded by Jules Grévy, and the republic gradually settled down under his presidency.

But the effects of the late conflict continued to be seen in the vigorous attacks made on religion and religious instruction, in the revival of socialism, and in the attempts of the extreme left to revise the constitution. Apart from these developments the decision in 1879 in favour of a republican form of government enabled the country to turn away from politics and to devote itself to industrial, commercial, and colonial undertakings. Railways were made, canals constructed, harbours improved, and public works of all kinds entered upon. Europe was entering upon a period of colonial expansion, and France embraced the opportunity of finding fresh outlets for her trade. In North and West Africa French arms and French explorers were successful in extending the claims and possessions of France, while an attempt was made to carry out the projects of Colbert and Louis XIV in Madagascar.

In the East an expedition was undertaken to Tonquin, though it is doubtful whether such distant enterprises have proved in any sense profitable to France or agreeable to her people. This " forward " policy, though synchronizing with a marvellous economical recovery, proved very expensive, for immense sums were laid out in building schools and in reorganizing and rearming the military forces. In 1884 France realized that she had not only to cope with religious dissensions, but had also to face serious financial difficulties. The hostility of the clergy to the republic was clearly seen in the events succeeding the 16th of May, 1877, and Gambetta and Jules Ferry had adopted measures of religious oppression. From 1880 to 1885 a very bitter feeling existed, which hindered the firm establishment of the republic and left behind a feeling of distrust.

During this period of expansion and development the country had seen the rise and fall of many ministries with supreme indifference. Wearied with this succession of ministries which lived by compromise, Gambetta attempted to form a strong party independent of the extremists of both sides. His failure and death, in 1882, left parties in great confusion, which was increased by the blunders made by Freycinet in his Egyptian policy and by a general feeling of uneasiness and discontent at the state of affairs in the French colonies. Added to these causes of discontent was a certain amount of dissatisfaction at the anti-clerical policy of Ferry, which showed itself in the elections of 1885, when an increased number of conservatives were returned. It was at this time that General Boulanger took advantage of the dissatisfaction at the political and economical situation and at the hostility of Germany, Austria, and Italy. "The Boulangist movement," says Mr. Bodley, "revealed that Cæsarism was ever latent in the French nature," and many people expected a *coup d'état* and the establishment of a dictatorship. The fate of President

Grévy, in 1887, followed by the election of Carnot to the presidency, had no effect in tranquillizing the agitation, and it was not till 1889 that Boulangerism perished with the flight of Boulanger. Amid the general satisfaction at the return of material prosperity it was recognised that the republic was built on stable foundations.

This victory of the republic had important results for France. The Tsar entered upon friendly negotiations with the French nation, which at the same time found that its relations with the Pope were able to be placed on a more satisfactory footing. Though a religious people, the French had consistently opposed at the polls the clerical cause so long as it was identified with the reactionary monarchists. The death of the Comte de Chambord and the conviction that the republic could be treated with induced the Pope, Leo XIII, to inaugurate a new policy. In his encyclical of February 16, 1892, the French Catholics were advised to accept the republic.

Though this attempt to restore peace between the government of France and the Church has not as yet had any marked effects, it is to be hoped that as time goes on the religious animosities, the product of the revolutions of the present century, may gradually be assuaged. At any rate, the clergy do not constitute a serious danger to the republic, which has found during the last four years in socialism a bitter opponent of parliamentary institutions.

The assassination of President Carnot, in 1894, followed by the resignation of Casimir-Périer, six months later, stirred France to its depths, and gave ample evidence of the existence of anarchist plots, of the unbridled license of the press, and of the paralysis of parliamentary government. The present President, M. Émile Loubet, has a difficult task before him in his endeavours to secure ministerial stability, to improve the financial system, to check intolerance, and to provide safeguards against the growth of anarchy itself, the product of the development of socialist doctrines among the working classes.

There is no doubt that socialism has gained ground in France during the last twenty years. The communists of 1871 were indeed overthrown, but in 1876 the labour movement again recommenced its public work in a congress held in Paris to consider co-operation. Fearful of the triumph of the monarchists, the liberals showed every desire to conciliate the workingmen, regarding them as useful allies in case of any reaction, and before long was published the Égalité, a journal openly advocating socialistic principles. In 1878, at the Lyons Congress, the doctrine of collectivism appeared, and was fiercely attacked by Gambetta, and the Égalité was suppressed. The following year the Marseilles Congress definitely passed a resolution affirming the desirability of nationalizing property and the instruments of production. Though declarations have been passed in opposition to co-operation and anarchy, the socialist movement is now joined by both co-operatives and anarchists.

As soon as an amnesty was granted to the ex-communists the socialist propaganda was resumed, and under the leadership of men like Marx and Guesde it was resolved to press for such reforms as the abolition of standing armies, an eight hours' bill, and liberty of public meetings. In the industrial centres socialism developed rapidly, and as the ruling powers in France were discredited by the Panama and other scandals, the ranks of the socialists were re-enforced by the discontented. The elections of

1893 and 1896 revealed the strength of the socialist organization, and it has become evident that in socialism the government of France has an opponent whose strength is unknown. It may be that rural France will again succeed in holding its own against both the forces of reaction and the new danger from socialism, and insure the steady development of representative institutions; but in any case universal suffrage has before it a period of trial.

CHAPTER XXII

THE FOREIGN RELATIONS OF FRANCE

I. To the Revolution of 1789

THE foreign policy of France has filled a large place in her history. Of all European nations, France has been the most willing to sacrifice constitutional progress for military glory. The Celtic blood which flows in the veins of such a large proportion of the nation is no doubt partly answerable for the spirit of adventure which has so frequently dominated French policy, but the geographical position of France, with its vulnerable frontier on the northeast, has at certain crises in her history rendered necessary the subordination of political development to military exigencies, and, indeed, to the necessity of safeguarding the welfare of the kingdom. Throughout her history France has essayed to be at once a sea as well as a military power; like England, she has aimed at securing vast colonial possessions and at establishing her influence in the Eastern no less than in the Western Hemisphere.

Such a policy was, however, not defined till the sixteenth century, for in the preceding ages the French were busy in consolidating their kingdom and in aiding their kings to repress the nobles and to expel the English from their land.

The accession of Hugh Capet marks the beginning of the period in which the French made their first efforts at foreign policy. In the crusades the adventurous French spirit was displayed to the world, already surprised by the successes of the Normans in England and Sicily. But the crusades were essentially cosmopolitan, and did not specially call out a national feeling in any of the countries which took a leading part in the struggle for the Holy Land. The crusades tended to bring men together and to make them realize that Europe was one great society.

The growth of hostility between France and England had, however, a contrary effect. It eventually called out feelings of patriotism and nationality in both countries, and led to the consolidation of France into a powerful and well-compacted nation. During the medieval period three distinct crises defined the relations of France with England: the Norman conquest, the reign of Henry II, and the reign of Edward III. The Norman conquest startled Europe, and from that event England was brought into close relations with the Continent, and especially with France. Henceforward till Henry II's reign the quarrels of Normans and Frenchmen were unceasing, and revealed the jealousy which the success of the Normans in conquering England had aroused. But it was to the complications caused by Henry II's position in France that we can definitely trace the origin of the national hostility between France and England. Though the crusades had aided the crown in beginning its policy of absorbing the estates of the great feudatories, Henry II's position in France as lord of a large portion of the country hindered the growth of centralization, and it became evident that the union of

France was impossible so long as England held any possessions in the French kingdom. French foreign policy thus resolved itself into hostility to England and alliance with England's foes. The success of Philip Augustus in uniting to the monarchy Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Poitou stimulated further efforts in the direction of unity, and Louis IX was equally successful in preventing Henry III regaining Poitou. With Philip IV a fresh step forward was taken, and, not content with expelling the English from France north of the Loire, the French kings henceforward aimed at amalgamating the English possessions between the Loire and the Pyrenees with the rest of France. To facilitate a task rendered especially difficult owing to the preference felt by the inhabitants of Bordeaux and the surrounding country for the English rule, Philip IV allied with Scotland. Till the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth the connection between France and Scotland formed a factor in European politics which had always to be reckoned with. France had gained a trustworthy and useful ally, and England had for centuries on her borders a foe always ready to take advantage of her difficulties.

This line of policy laid down by Philip IV was followed and developed by Philip VI when the next great crisis in the relations between France and England—the Hundred Years' War—brought the two nations into open hostility. In spite of the defeats of the French at Crécy and Poitiers, and of the Scots at Neville's Cross, the French kings never wavered from their true policy. Compelled to make the Treaty of Bretigny, John left to his son Charles V the duty of tearing it up and of watching for an opportunity of driving the English out of France. Philip VI had rightly resolved on expelling the foreigners from Guienne and Gascony, and had brought upon his country the Hundred Years' War. His policy was fully justified when his grandson, Charles V, succeeded in taking from the English all their possessions in France, save Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne.

Unfortunately, the weakness of Charles VI and the strength of Henry V enabled the latter for a time to establish a temporary hold on France. But he was building upon sand, and no sooner did a weak executive govern England than France, stimulated by a growing national feeling, drove out the invader, and in 1453 England only held Calais. The Hundred Years' War, in spite of its early failures and the discredit thrown upon chivalry, had proved successful, and the policy of Philip IV and his descendants was fully justified. So long as England held a considerable portion of the country, so long was it impossible for France either to rest within her borders or to take her part in Continental politics.

The situation in Europe in the middle of the fifteenth century was assuming a threatening aspect, and in view of (1) the growing weakness of Italy, divided as it was into numerous small states, and of (2) the rapid consolidation of monarchies, it was very necessary in the interests of the balance of power that France should be well compacted, united, and able to bear her share in the solution of the new problems which were about to be laid before the world. Free from the incubus of the English occupation, Louis XI rapidly concentrated his efforts upon the reduction of the remaining semi-independent members of the *noblesse apanagée*. The danger from Charles the Bold being removed, France was consolidated, and her recovery from her own civil wars and from the English invasions made rapid progress.

On his accession Charles VIII found himself able to lay aside the hereditary hostility of France to England and to embark upon a new line of foreign policy, which continued till 1688, and in some respects till 1756. This new foreign policy, with its many ramifications and stupendous results, he inaugurated by his invasion of Italy in 1494, with which invasion the middle ages end and modern times begin. His invasion of Italy was repeated by Louis XII and Francis I, and the French did not finally give up all hopes of gaining part of Italy till the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrèsis. As soon as Charles of Spain became the Emperor Charles V France found that her struggle for Italy had forced upon her the necessity of opposing by all means in her power the threatened establishment in Europe of the supremacy of the Austro-Spanish house. Till 1700, when Charles II of Spain died, the interests of the Hapsburgs of Spain and Austria were mainly identical, and the foreign policy of the French kings was, with but few exceptions, anti-Hapsburg. Till 1688 the friendship between France and England was rarely broken, and all efforts were concentrated on attempts to break down the Hapsburg power. For this stupendous task it was necessary for French kings and statesmen to bring into play qualities and resources entirely different from those used in the conflicts between France and England. Diplomacy was called into being, political marriages came into vogue, and a system of alliances was evolved, which continued not only into the eighteenth century, but which was utilized by Napoleon I, and formed the basis of his policy in central Europe.

In this struggle between France and the Hapsburgs, so valuable in the interests of the balance of power, the enterprise and resources of France came as a revelation to Europe. Her sons, indeed, had taken a leading part in the crusades; the Normans had conquered England and founded a flourishing kingdom in Apulia and Sicily, which, under William the Good, a contemporary of the English Henry II, had enjoyed great prosperity; French nobles had fought against the Turks in Hungary and in Scotland against the English; but it was not till the sixteenth century, when Francis I and Henry II essayed to check the endeavours of Charles V to establish his supremacy over Germany and Italy, to enforce religious uniformity, and practically to dominate Europe, that the European powers realized the defensive strength of France and the political skill no less than the military qualities of the French nation.

In this struggle France laid Europe under a debt of gratitude, and the results of the contest were far-reaching in Western Christendom and in France itself. Advantage was taken of the accession of the ambitious Turkish emperor Solyman the Magnificent to concert combined attacks on Charles V from the East as well as from the West, alliances were made with the north Protestant princes, and a "system" was founded the effects of which can be traced through all French history. Catholic at home and Protestant abroad, France succeeded in gaining Metz, Toul, and Verdun from Charles V, and though the Hapsburgs were by no means seriously weakened, the French monarchy during the sixteenth century preserved the balance of power and gave full evidence of its value as a member of the European political system. Under several strong kings France was able to make opposition to the Hapsburgs in Austria and Spain the leading feature of her foreign policy. Till 1756 it was the settled aim of Henry IV, Richelieu, Louis XIV, and Louis XV to reduce the power or, if possible, to break the power of the Austrian house; while till 1700, when Louis XIV's grandson became King of Spain, it was equally important in the eyes of the French rulers to crush the Spanish Hapsburgs.

The Peace of Cateau-Cambrèsis, in 1558, allowed breathing time for the combatants, who had been in a state of war for nearly forty years, and their religious conflicts compelled the French to concentrate all their attention on internal matters and only spasmodically to interfere in the warfare consequent on the rise of the Dutch republic. While Philip II was annexing Portugal and was busily engaged in the congenial task of endeavouring to crush Protestantism and political liberty in Holland, the Catholics and Huguenots were tearing each other to pieces. It was not till the accession of Henry IV that France was able to pick up the threads of her foreign policy which she had laid down in 1558.

During the interval much had happened. The Counter-Reformation had advanced with steady steps, and central and northern Germany seemed likely to be restored to the papal authority. The Jesuits were full of hope, and their successes justified the belief that Protestantism was on the wane. England and Holland, however, were brilliant exceptions to the general failure to resist the tide of papal aggression. England had by the defeat of the Spanish Armada dealt a serious blow to the reputation of the Spanish monarchy, and a new epoch in history was opened, which was to prove disastrous to the commercial monopoly of Spain in South America and the Indies. The resistance of Holland to Philip II had inaugurated a new era in the history of political liberty and freedom of thought, and had vindicated the right of a downtrodden nation to rise against oppression and intolerance.

Though Philip II had failed against England and Holland, he had conquered Portugal, and his colonial possessions were immense; allied with Austria and supported by the papacy, the combined power of the Hapsburgs in Vienna and Madrid constituted a standing menace to Protestantism and the balance of power. The independence of Holland could easily be overthrown by armies co-operating by land and sea. Spanish troops could march through north Italy, and by way of the Rhine to the Netherlands; the German Protestants were divided into the camps of Calvinists and Lutherans, and incapable of offering a united resistance; Poland was strongly Catholic. It only required Austria to produce a capable ruler, fanatical in religious matters, cool and collected when dealing with politics, in order to set Europe ablaze from the Baltic to the Adriatic.

Henry IV, one of the greatest kings of France, fully realized the danger to the balance of power and to France which the condition of affairs in central Europe implied. It was quite evident that no *modus vivendi* could be arranged between the Protestants and the advancing tide of Catholicism, and that the chances of a European war increased daily. It was equally evident that if the combatants were left to fight it out the triumph of the Hapsburgs was assured, and with that triumph Europe, as in the time of Charles V, would be again threatened with a Hapsburg supremacy.

Henry IV's policy was obvious, and in vigorous and characteristic fashion he set to work to carry it out. The predominance of the Hapsburgs in Europe had already been checked by France, and the efforts and projects of Charles V had come to naught. The same danger in a different form and under different conditions had again appeared, and France prepared to insist upon the preservation of the balance of power and the continuance to the north German princes of the enjoyment of their political independence and their religious liberties. United with England, Henry IV had already entered upon his new undertaking, and the true foreign policy of France was being effectively carried out, when his sudden death relieved the Hapsburgs of a dangerous opponent and destroyed French influence in Europe for about fifteen years. The retirement of a prominent nation from active participation in European politics would be in ordinary times a very serious matter, but coming, as it did, during the first thirty years of the seventeenth century, which formed a period of exceptional anxiety, it had a very disastrous effect on the course of events. A great war was hanging over Europe, the forces of disorder and anarchy were on the verge of being let loose. Europe could ill spare the determined will, the cool head, and the tolerant mind of Henry IV, backed by all the resources of France. His death was an unspeakable disaster for Europe. France lost the opportunity of guiding Western Christendom at this crisis, and of imposing barriers to the advancing power of the Hapsburg and the Jesuit.

Freed from all anxiety with regard to France, Europe plunged into the Thirty Years' War very much after the fashion of a rudderless ship in a gale of wind. Ferdinand of Styria, who, as Emperor Ferdinand II, controlled the destinies of Austria during the early part of the war, did, indeed, know his own mind, and at one time seemed likely, with the aid of Wallenstein, to extend Austrian predominance all over Germany, and to make the Baltic "an Austrian lake." But he had called out spirits which he could not lay, and after the landing of Gustavus Adolphus in Pomerania, Germany, though saved from Austrian tyranny, began to experience such anarchy as had not been witnessed by civilized Europe since the days succeeding the fall of the Roman Empire.

France, meanwhile, having recovered from the evil effects of the minority of Louis XIII, began again to take an interest in the politics of Europe and to return to the policy of Francis I, Henry II, and Henry IV, only to find that a situation had been created which, but for the death of Henry IV, might have been prevented. Under the able hands of Richelieu, however, France adapted herself to the position in Europe. Gustavus Adolphus had by his victories decided the religious question, and henceforward there was no fear of the permanent supremacy of the Jesuits in north Germany. But the political question was still unsolved, and the possibility of the establishment of the predominance of the Hapsburgs was itself sufficient to call for energetic action on the part of France. To check the possibility of such predominance was the work of Richelieu. He definitely attempted to organize alliances with Sweden, Poland, and Turkey, so as to hamper the Austrians on their flanks; he made treaties with Italian princes, so as to bring about the expulsion of Germans from Italy; he aided Portugal to establish her independence; he intrigued in Germany against the emperor; he made great efforts to secure the friendship and support of the Dutch. In every part of Europe the Hapsburgs were confronted by the activity of Richelieu. His policy was continued by Mazarin, and while the Peace of Westphalia attests the triumph of French foreign policy over the Austrians and the establishment of religious freedom and political independence in the small German states, the Peace of the Pyrenees marks the definite fall of Spain from the high place which she had occupied in Europe since the days of Ferdinand and Isabella. By the time of the death of Mazarin France had accomplished in great part the policy which she had entered upon in the days of the rivalry between Francis I and Charles V. Her own frontiers had been safeguarded and extended, her hereditary foes of the house of Hapsburg had been weakened, the German states had been taught to look to her for protection, Sweden was her close ally, Poland and Turkey were not unwilling to cultivate her friendship; in a word, France in 1661 occupied a remarkably strong position at home and abroad.

Under Louis XIV's personal rule the policy of opposition to the house of Hapsburg was continued with vigour, though sundry variations from that policy were made, and certain new developments were entered upon. Not content with making, first, the absorption of the Spanish monarchy and, later, the complete subjugation of the Germanic powers the object of his foreign policy, Louis also entered upon a competition with England and Holland in America and the far East, and endeavoured by strenuous efforts to further the expansion of the French colonies in America and of the French settlements in India. Till 1688 Louis's endeavours were, on the whole, crowned with success. Austria, involved in a Turkish war, was not the equal of France, whose frontier had advanced and been strengthened by the seizure of Strasbourg and other places. Coincident with successes in Europe the colonial possessions in North America flourished, and there was hope that in India French influence would prove superior to that of England and Holland.

Unfortunately Louis failed, while carrying out his policy, to realize the limitations to his power, the strength of the Protestant sentiment in Germany, or the violence done to the patriotism of the empire by his *réunions*, and especially by his seizure of Strasbourg. The clearly defined policy of Henry IV and Richelieu had been discarded for one far more ambitious, and perhaps more magnificent, but one which proved absolutely unattainable.

In part this policy no doubt attuned itself admirably to the national wishes. It had always been a tradition that the Rhine was the true French boundary, and all efforts to reach it met with the approbation of the French people. But it was a policy which required delicate handling, and such rude methods as the capture of Strasbourg in time of peace and the filching of territories from the empire by means of the Chambers of Réunion were only calculated to arouse the suspicions of Europe.

The year 1688 was in many ways a fateful one for the French nation. Since the days of Francis I and Wolsey England and France had remained for the most part at peace. With the expulsion of the English from France by Charles VII no ostensible ground for hatred and mutual hostility existed. Wolsey had recognised the futility of continuing an ancient feud for which no sufficient grounds existed, and his policy was continued by Elizabeth, who made the French alliance the basis of her foreign policy. Both countries were interested in checking the growth of the Hapsburg power, whether for political or religious reasons; both were anxious to see the independence of the Dutch secured; both had friendly relations with the north German princes. In the sixteenth and the early part of the seventeenth centuries there was no immediate ground for expecting that the colonial interests of France and England would clash. In electing to ally with France and not with Spain Cromwell not only continued the Elizabethan tradition, but he showed a realization of the fact that at that time England's trade had more to fear from Spanish than French competition.

Friendship between France and England during the later Cromwellian period was as advantageous for France as it was for England. It enabled Mazarin to come victoriously out of the war with Spain and by means of Louis XIV's marriage with the Spanish Infanta to prepare for the eventual ascendency of the French king in the Peninsula, and for the gradual absorption by France of outlying territories belonging to Spain. Cromwell's death left France the dominant military power on the Continent, for the later Stuarts abdicated the influential position won in Europe by the great Protector and confined their efforts to the active development of England's maritime and colonial interests.

Mazarin had therefore continued with success the hereditary policy of France toward the Hapsburgs, though, like Richelieu, he had to act frequently on the defensive, and he had again renewed with England those friendly relations which the events of the civil war in England and the unstable policy of the English court had for a time weakened. Louis XIV on his accession to power at once hastened to take advantage of Mazarin's successful diplomacy. English friendship, or, at any rate, English neutrality, was absolutely necessary for the satisfactory execution of the many schemes which were maturing in Louis's mind, and for his aggressive wars. Apart from the sudden outburst of national antipathy to France when the famous Triple Alliance of 1668 was signed by England, Holland, and Prussia, the policy of the English court remained steadily favourable to Louis's designs throughout the reign of Charles II and James II. The value of such a policy to France cannot be overestimated. Freed from all fear of any serious intervention on the side of England, Louis was able to enter upon the execution of his aggressive designs.

Though the efforts of Richelieu and Mazarin had succeeded in destroying the ascendency of the house of Hapsburg in Europe and in hastening that decline of Spain which since Philip II's death was becoming more and more apparent, Louis resolved to acquire, with the death of Charles II of Spain, the whole Spanish monarchy for his family, and in the meantime to annex its outlying territories. "After 1665," wrote the late Sir John Seeley, "the Spanish monarchy is a passive prey, supported only by the policy of the sea powers, and experiencing no revival until it passes into the hands of the house of Bourbon."

Till 1678, however, no general dread of French ascendency in Europe was aroused. England and Holland were far from becoming allies, and the German princes were, for the most part, the paid servants of the Grand Monarque. As long as there was no universal sentiment in Germany against the French pretensions, it was impossible for the emperor to resist the advance of the monarchy of Louis XIV, and he was forced to accept for a time a position humiliating to the wearer of the imperial crown. Till the Peace of Nimeguen the spirit which animated the policy of Richelieu and Mazarin can be to some extent traced in Louis's foreign policy. While England remained, if not an ally, at any rate a passive spectator of Continental politics, the diplomacy which Richelieu and Mazarin had so ably put into force was continued, and with admirable results. Spain was isolated in the war of Devolution, and lost territory; Holland was isolated in the beginning of the Dutch war of 1672, and only just escaped annihilation; and though Europe showed uneasiness, and the imperial troops and the Brandenburgers took up arms, the Peace of Nimeguen gave Louis Franche-Comté, with the occupation of Lorraine, and left the French monarchy at the height of its power.

So far Louis had mainly concerned himself with the Spanish branch of the house of Hapsburg, but after Nimeguen he seems to have seriously considered the advisability of preparing the ground for his candidature for the imperial crown. The idea of making Louis emperor had floated through the brain of Mazarin; it had already been considered by Louis himself; and as after 1678 the Spanish succession question remained in abeyance, it was but natural that a man of the temperament and ambition of the French king should throw aside all questions of prudence and enter upon an adventurous course of policy.

The years from 1678 to 1688 form the turning point in Louis's career, if not in the history of France. From the days of Francis I France had pursued a foreign policy which was marked, on the whole, by sagacity and determination. She had acted as the opponent of the attempts of the Hapsburgs to form an empire based on militarism and intolerance. All supporters of progress and liberty had gathered round her, and she had become the head of an imposing system of alliances. Representing great universal interests, France under Henry IV, Richelieu, and Mazarin never menaced the liberties of Europe or encroached upon the neighbouring states. From 1661 to 1678 France occupied a position far stronger than she had held at any previous time. With her army reorganized by Louvois and commanded by Turenne and Condé, her finances restored, her manufactures encouraged, her navy improved, and her colonies developed by Colbert, France under the wise direction of a Richelieu would have proved irresistible.

After 1678, however, Louis abandoned the statesmanlike traditions which the cardinal had followed, and embarked on a policy which for audacity remained unsurpassed till the Revolutionary period. This policy was nothing less than to advance the French frontier toward Germany, even though that entailed the complete alienation of those princes of the empire who had been attached to France since the sixteenth century. Hitherto the French policy carried out so successfully at the Peace of Westphalia had emphasized the differences between the princes of the empire and the emperor. To their advocacy of the interests of Germany as opposed to those of the house of Austria France owed much of her success. Louis now deliberately threw all his German supporters, Protestant and Catholic alike, on the side of the emperor, and at the same time still further incensed the Calvinist and Lutheran states in the empire by his intolerant conduct toward the Huguenots. By the seizure of Strasbourg and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes Louis practically renounced the position of protector of the Protestant states in Germany and retired from the position of champion of Germanic liberties against the emperor. It only required the deposition of James II and the accession of William III to complete the isolation of France in Europe.

The year 1688 is the end of a brilliant and successful period in the foreign policy of France, the period of Francis I, Henry IV, Richelieu, Mazarin, and Colbert. It marks the beginning of a period full of disasters in Europe and the colonies, ending with the disastrous Peace of Paris in 1763 and the Revolution. From 1688 is opened the commercial and colonial duel with England, which ended in the discomfiture of France and the foundation of the British Empire. Though France held her own against Austria, she only did so by returning in the eighteenth century to the system—then out of date—of utilizing the jealousy felt by certain German princes towards the emperor. But this tardy recognition of the blunders resulting from the overweening ambition of Louis XIV did not compensate for the loss of the North American colonies and for the defeat of the French schemes in India.

The interests of Protestantism all over the world, the commercial interests of England and Holland, the national interests of Germany, were all opposed to Louis, who, till within two years of his death, struggled bravely but in vain against his enemies. He did, indeed, win one notable success when he placed his grandson, Philip, on the Spanish throne, and thus gave France till the Revolution a valuable ally. But he lived to see the English established in a portion of Canada and at Gibraltar, and the Austrian power in possession of the Spanish Netherlands, Milan, and Naples. The accession of Philip V of Spain, the tearing up of the Partition Treaties, and the seizure of the Barrier fortresses had roused the fears of William III. France and Spain united would, it was feared, place Louis XIV in command of the greatest commercial and colonial system in the world. Spain under French influence would revive, and the commercial interests of England and Holland would be endangered, if not ruined. William's fears were justified. With the accession of Philip the decline of Spain was arrested; French energy invigorated her whole system, and till the death of Charles III Spain experienced a continuous and most unexpected recovery. The Spanish Succession War was essentially a commercial war, fought to prevent the Mediterranean from becoming a French lake. At the end of the struggle England definitely assumed the character of a great commercial state, while France had been so weakened by the war that she ceased for many years to be a danger to Europe. Protestantism was safe, the influence of the Counter-Reformation was ended. France had entered in 1688 upon a new period in her foreign policy, and her rivalry with England continued till 1815. The Hundred Years' War had been fought to secure the expulsion of the English and the consolidation of France; the second Hundred Years' War was waged for supremacy on the sea and in the colonies; and the wars from 1689 to 1697 and from 1702 to 1713 marked the beginning of the long struggle.

On the death of Louis XIV an opportunity of reconsidering her system of alliances was presented to France. The policy of opposition to Austria was out of date. Charles VI alone was not a serious danger to the integrity of France; Sweden, Poland, and Turkey were no longer powerful allies. France is a country that has never willingly continued for any long period without allies. In the Hundred Years' War the Scottish alliance proved of real value, and during the years of rivalry between Francis I and Charles V the ties of friendship between France and the north German Protestant princes and her close relations with Turkey constituted important additions to the difficulties of the Hapsburgs. Similarly during the period of the religious wars France found in England an ally, while throughout Richelieu's administration foreign alliances with Sweden, Holland, the princes in Germany, and Italy formed an important part of his policy. During the early portion of Louis XIV's personal rule his strength lay in the number of his allies, and it was between 1661 and 1688 that the system of alliances with Sweden, Poland, and Turkey as a means of weakening the house of Austria was definitely formulated. Though Louis's mistakes alienated his German supporters and weakened his connection with Sweden, he entered the Spanish Succession War in close alliance with the electors of Bavaria and Cologne. France has seldom been isolated, and on the rare occasions when she has found herself in a position of isolation she has never rested till she has gathered round her a number of trustworthy allies.

When Orléans found himself in office as regent Spain was alienated, Turkey was at war with Austria, Sweden was with difficulty holding her own against a coalition, France herself was exhausted and practically isolated in Europe. In this precarious position, when the designs of Philip V, if successfully carried out, would have overthrown the regency, France was forced to look around for allies. The immediate danger came from Spain, where Alberoni was endeavouring to further the wishes of Philip and his queen, Elizabeth of Farnese, without detriment to the true interests of Spain. The only power which, in the condition of Europe, was able to offer the government of the regency the means of establishing itself on a permanent basis was England, and that power had been the principal enemy of France during the late Spanish Succession War. The interests of England and France still clashed in the colonies and on the sea, and the two countries were about to enter upon a fierce rivalry in India.

But the necessity for self-preservation weighed more with Orléans than national considerations. The dynastic interests of his house were at stake, and, moreover, France was at that time in no condition to undertake fresh enterprises against England. In order, therefore, to protect his interests against the Spanish Bourbons and to prevent a good understanding being arrived at between Alberoni and the English king, he opened, through Dubois, negotiations with George I which led to the famous Triple Alliance of 1717. A new system, based on the friendship and interests of the houses of Orléans and Hanover, was thus formed, which lasted till 1742. Its continuance, after it had served its immediate purpose, was no doubt due to the peaceful proclivities of Fleury and Walpole, both of whom abhorred war and staved off as long as possible the inevitable collision between France and England. The years between 1717 and 1742 thus constitute a parenthesis in the second Hundred Years' War, and for the time the commercial and colonial rivalry of the two countries was subordinated to other considerations—only to break out all the fiercer in the War of the Austrian Succession and the Seven Years' War.

Possessed of the English alliance, which gave her that immunity from attack which was so needful after the exhausting War of the Spanish Succession, France had no question of foreign policy to deal with of vital importance. Still the regent was compelled to consider the value of the traditional friendship of France with Sweden, Poland, and Turkey—a friendship bequeathed to him by Louis XIV. Some decision with regard to the attitude to be adopted toward this system of alliances was rendered necessary, owing to the sudden rise of the great Muscovite power.

The appearance of Russia as a European state constituted nothing less than a revolution, and it became necessary for Europe to recognise the real meaning of the introduction of a new factor into the existing political system. To none of the great powers was the rise of Russia of such vast importance as to France.

The policy which the French government had hitherto followed in order to check any danger from Austrian preponderance had consisted of alliances with Sweden, Poland, and Turkey, all of which powers were to be numbered among the declining nations of Europe in the eighteenth century. The question before France was simply whether it would not be wise for her to substitute a Russian for the existing alliances in the north and east of Europe. To the regent Orléans and Cardinal Fleury the question was for the first time submitted. Momentous issues hung upon the decision of the French government, which was naturally averse to entering upon a new and adventurous policy without very sufficient reason. Some modern French writers have not hesitated to criticise severely the refusal of Orléans to form a close offensive and defensive alliance with Russia, and have declared that a union between the two countries would have been most beneficial to French interests. It is true that France found little to reward her in her Swedish, Polish, and Turkish connections, but when the Russian alliance was proposed to Orléans the treaty with England had just been made, and the friendship between the French and English courts might have been weakened, if not destroyed, by a treaty with Russia, with which country England was not on very friendly relations. Furthermore, it was impossible to tell if Peter the Great's empire would be a permanent political structure. It had risen suddenly; it might equally suddenly decline. There was therefore much to be said for the conservative policy pursued in the north and east of Europe by Orléans and Dubois, under whose guidance France was beginning to recover from the effects of Louis XIV's foreign policy. It would, however, have been better for France if the regency of Orléans had inaugurated a complete break with traditions of foreign policy which were obsolete; as events proved, a Russian alliance could not have resulted in disasters equalling in magnitude those which accompanied her policy from 1740 to 1763.

That period included the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), at the close of which France found that she had not only raised up a dangerous foe in Prussia, but had lost Canada to England and all chance of founding an empire in India. These twenty-three years stand out in French history as being replete with errors from which France has never recovered. Mistake after mistake was made and never rectified. Till 1740 the reputation of France stood high, immense possibilities were before her; it was conceivable that the Latin and not the Teutonic race might be supreme in North America and India; it was by no means decided that England was to gain an unquestioned supremacy of the sea. But between 1740 and 1763 France threw all her chances away, and after 1763, in spite of the efforts of Choiseul and Vergennes, she gradually drifted, overwhelmed with debt, into the jaws of the Revolution.

In 1740 it was evident that as Spain (with which power she had again formed, in 1733, a close alliance) was involved in a commercial war with England France would also be drawn into hostilities. In the event of such a contingency it behoved Fleury to refit the fleet, which was in no condition for war, and to prepare to carry on with vigour the conflict with England in the colonies and on the sea. For such a struggle France would be compelled to strain every effort, to concentrate her whole attention on the war, and to make serious sacrifices of men and money.

Instead of carrying out such a scheme which the crisis imperatively demanded, the French government entered not only upon a conflict with England, but also, simultaneously, upon the Austrian Succession War.

It is difficult to stigmatize adequately the folly of such a proceeding. The revival of the anti-Austrian policy of Francis I, Henry IV, Richelieu, and Louis XIV was a blunder of the worst description. The Hapsburgs no longer threatened the balance of power, and certainly after the Polish Succession War (1733–1735), when France had gained Lorraine, Austria had rapidly declined in strength. For the sake of the preservation of the balance of power France ought to have supported Maria Theresa instead of aiding in the attempt to partition her territories. When the war was concluded at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle the

French people realized that the one result of all their efforts was that Prussia, an ungrateful ally, had secured Silesia, and that the French position in Canada and India was threatened.

In the Seven Years' War mistakes of equal magnitude were made. The Treaty of Westminster, concluded between England and Prussia in January, 1756, was no doubt expected, but it did not justify France in consenting (in May of the same year) to the Treaty of Versailles, by the terms of which she was bound to carry on war with Great Britain until it suited Austria to make peace with Prussia, or in making with Austria the arrangements of 1757 and 1758, by which she promised her armed co-operation in Europe.

France thus entered upon her final struggle with England for the supremacy in North America, in India, and on the sea, fatally hampered by her agreements with Austria. Till the Revolution she remained allied with Spain and Austria. Though she successfully aided the Americans to secure their independence, and so far avenged herself on England for her losses in the Seven Years' War, her importance in Europe was sadly diminished; and she was forced to stand by and see Poland partitioned without being able to effectively interfere to check the perpetration of a vast national crime. Her foreign policy since 1740 had been singularly devoid of perspicacity and foresight. No statesman of wide views appeared who was able to guide France at the most critical period of her later history. The succession of family compacts with Spain was an inadequate makeweight against the loss of her colonies and the decline of her prestige in Europe. If the Revolution was necessary in order to set right the defects of her internal organization, it was no less necessary in the interests of her foreign relations.

Ever since Louis XIV's death France had been singularly deficient in statesmen of ability. With the exception of Dubois and Vergennes, she could boast of no name equal to Pitt, or Carteret, or even to Stanhope. Vergennes, indeed, made prodigious and, to some extent, successful efforts. He recognised that the overwhelming disasters of the Seven Years' War were due to the mistake of the French government in attempting to conduct great campaigns in central Europe while waging war with Great Britain on the sea and in the colonies. Therefore, when engaged in aiding the Americans, he carefully abstained from playing any part in European politics, and devoted all the available resources of France to checkmating the English in America.

The signal success which attended his policy for a time blinded his contemporaries to the difficulties in which, through the active part taken in the American struggle, the French nation became involved. The financial position of France, owing to the immense sums paid to the Americans, became hopeless, while the American movement excited a zeal for natural law and natural liberty. The French officers and soldiers who fought for the colonists were obviously affected by the considerations which had led the Americans to take up arms. The arguments used by the colonists to justify their resistance to England told with tenfold force against the despotism of Louis XVI. In France self-government and representation had been unknown for centuries, and on their return to their homes the French officers, like Lafayette, naturally felt compelled to fight for liberty, to resist the view that power emanated from the king and not from the people, and to regard the past history of France as a warning and not as an example. But as Lord Acton, in his Lectures on the French Revolution, has with great felicity pointed out, the ideas which France adopted from America belonged almost exclusively to the war period (when the colonists were in the throes of their struggle for liberty or death), and not to the constitutional period which followed the war.

Vergennes's foreign policy in all respects was brilliant. The English defeat in America was followed by the establishment of French influence in Holland, and on his death, in February, 1787, France seemed to be recovering the position which she had lost in 1763. But though allied to Austria, Spain, and Holland, France at the death of Vergennes was in reality powerless. Joseph II of Austria disliked his connection with France, and was anxious to be freed from it. The Spanish alliance was of little real value, and in 1788 the French influence in Holland was easily overthrown by England and Prussia. At the time of the French Revolution France had no capable statesmen and no valuable allies. She was practically isolated in Europe.

II. After the Revolution of 1789

As was only to be expected, the outbreak of the French Revolution had some very curious effects upon the foreign policy of France. The well-meaning, but utterly inexperienced men who abounded in the Constituent Assembly propounded views entirely at variance with those held in the chancelleries of Europe. Henceforward, they declared, wars were to cease, as being opposed to reason, justice, and liberty. Wars for the balance of power would be in the future impossible, for France would induce all nations to adopt her principles, and thus the recognition of the principle of the rights of man would lead to universal peace.

In such a condition of things diplomacy would find its work simple, for alliances based on dynastic considerations would no longer exist, and nations would confine their efforts to uniting all peoples in a resolve to preserve peace. The majority of the Constituent Assembly were so affected by the belief in their pacific professions and so convinced in their permanent value that, on May 22, 1790, they passed a resolution that the French nation renounces all warlike enterprises with the object of making conquests, and will not employ its arms against the liberty of any nation.

But while these pacific protestations were being made France was on the verge of a war with Great Britain over the affair of Nootka Sound—a matter which directly affected Spain, but France only in so far as she had not as yet repudiated the Family Compact.

During the greater part of 1790 the chances of peace and war were evenly divided, and the discussions on the subject bring out clearly the immense difficulty which the French nation experienced in attempting to break away from ancient traditions, and to substitute for a system of alliances a scheme of no wars and no entangling engagements. It also becomes evident that in 1789 and 1790 Mirabeau alone of Frenchmen understood foreign politics, and that without his advice France would probably have been plunged into a long and disastrous war. As his career and that of Dumouriez illustrate the utter impossibility for a great nation like France to suddenly ignore its past history, and at the bidding of a number of well-meaning philosophers to inaugurate a period of peace in Europe, it may be profitable to follow rather closely the views of these two men, so dissimilar in character, on foreign policy.

Mirabeau's claim to the title of statesman depends upon the view taken of the value of his influence over the foreign policy of France. In no department was his superiority over his contemporaries so clearly seen as in that of foreign affairs. In no department had he so free a hand, in no department was his personality so strongly asserted, in no department were his own views so consistently and successfully carried out. And no more striking proof can be found of the remarkable influence wielded by Mirabeau in shaping and directing the foreign policy of France at a critical period than in the confusion which, upon his death, immediately ensued in the foreign office.

On questions of internal policy Mirabeau had, as we know, little opportunity of initiating and carrying out a policy. His letters and speeches, indeed, give us a fairly clear idea of the principles which would have characterized a government of which he was a member. Unfortunately, he was never in a position to carry out his ideas and to give France a popular and stable constitution.

With regard to foreign affairs, however, Mirabeau's position was entirely different. Though each member of the Assembly might think himself fully qualified to discuss every question bearing on the making of the constitution, as yet the complete ignorance of the mass of Frenchmen on foreign questions rendered the deputies more inclined to follow Mirabeau in matters affecting the relations of

France with Europe. The vacillating and in many ways incompetent Montmorin, too, was easily persuaded, as soon as he had a hint of Mirabeau's connection with the court, to leave the direction of foreign politics in the hands of a man who already, before the meeting of the States-General, had given him ample proof of an acquaintance with the politics of central Europe unsurpassed by any of his contemporaries.

From the appointment of the Diplomatic Committee, at the end of July, 1790, to his death, in April, 1791, the management of foreign affairs was practically in the hands of Mirabeau, who, through his complete ascendency over Montmorin, became in effect "a constitutional foreign minister." By inspiring Montmorin's despatches and explanations before the Assembly Mirabeau was able to defend Montmorin's policy. Thus, by Mirabeau's means, a harmony was established between the ministers and the Assembly, which, had it existed in other departments, would have rendered the work of the government far easier, and would have checked the constant and baneful interference of the Assembly with the executive.

Of living Frenchmen no one was so well qualified to guide France in 1790. Mirabeau had not only studied the constitutions of Switzerland and of Prussia, of England and of America; he had himself resided in England and Prussia, in Holland and Switzerland. And of his many writings which bear evidence of his intimate acquaintance with the most pressing questions of the day, none illustrates so clearly his profound views on European politics as does the Secret History of the Court of Berlin. Vergennes had himself recognised Mirabeau's capacity by sending him, in June, 1786, on a secret mission to the court of Berlin, but it was not till 1790 that his experience could be placed at the service of France.

In dealing with foreign matters, Mirabeau found himself involved in questions of unusual difficulty. The year 1790 had opened in the midst of revolution and wars, which seemed to betoken serious changes in the European state system. A revolution had, early in 1789, been successfully carried out by Gustavus III in the interests of the monarchy; later on in the year the revolution in the Austrian Netherlands against the reforms of Joseph II had broken out; and on January 10, 1790, an Act of Union of the Belgian United Provinces had been drawn up and the dominion of the emperor shaken off.

Poland, fired by the example of France, had determined to carry out reforms, and in May, 1790, a new constitution, intended to establish an orderly government capable of defending her independence against the intrigues and attacks of Russia, was accepted by the Diet. In the north of Europe, Russia and Sweden were carrying on a naval war, and, till peace was made at Werela, in August, 1790, it was always possible that Gustavus III might appeal successfully to France for succour. In the east, Russia and Austria were leagued together for the dismemberment of Turkey, and this conflict seemed most likely to lead to a general European conflagration. The Triple Alliance of 1788, between England, Prussia, and Holland, had, as far as Pitt was concerned, been formed mainly for defensive and pacific purposes. That statesman hoped, by gradually including in the system Turkey, Sweden, and perhaps the emperor, to place a solid barrier against the ambition of both Russia and France, and to secure a lasting peace.

But though England was disinterestedly anxious for peace, Pitt's pacific views were not shared by Frederick William or by his minister, Hertzberg, who burned to take advantage of the distracted condition of the Hapsburg empire and to enlarge the boundaries of Prussia by the addition of Danzig and Thorn. Hence Prussian aid had been given to Gustavus III in his struggle against Catherine, and treaties had been made with Turkey at the end of January, 1790, and with Poland in March, both obviously aimed at Russia and Austria. The death, on February 20, 1790, of Joseph II, a sovereign who had "failed in everything he undertook," and the accession of Leopold II, whose clear-sighted, determined, and pacific policy was in full harmony with that of the English cabinet, were destined to prevent the extension of the Turkish war into a great and general European conflict. But, owing to the warlike attitude of Prussia, the prospect for several months remained menacing, and it was not till the end of July that the preliminaries of peace between Austria and Turkey were drawn up and the difficulties between Austria and Prussia definitely adjusted by the Congress of Reichenbach. Into this highly charged political atmosphere the affair of Nootka Sound fell like a bomb in the early spring of 1790 and threatened to bring upon Western Europe a war, in which England, Prussia, and Holland would contend against the allied Bourbon powers of France and Spain. Thus during the first half of 1790 two more European wars were in immediate prospect, in addition to (1) the wars in the north and Turkey and (2) the civil war in the Netherlands.

It was in connection with the difficult Nootka Sound question that Mirabeau's ability to deal with foreign politics and his success in preventing the illusions of the Assembly from affecting the course of diplomacy were clearly demonstrated. The event which constituted the "affair" of Nootka Sound had taken place as early as April, 1789. A trading settlement had been made by some English merchants at Nootka Sound, on Vancouver Island, near the coast of California. The Spaniards in Mexico viewed with jealousy this settlement in a district to which they had no just rights either by discovery or occupation, and asserted a claim to all the western coast of America between Cape Horn and the sixtieth degree of latitude.

They therefore sent two Spanish ships of war to Nootka Sound. An English vessel—the Iphigenia—was seized, her officers and crew put in irons, and the vessel was only restored and allowed to sail away to the Sandwich Islands after her cargo had been plundered. The settlement was destroyed, the British flag was hauled down, and the Spanish flag hoisted in its place. Somewhat later three other smaller English vessels were seized and detained. The news of these outrages reached England in February, 1790, and there seemed little doubt that the action of the Spaniards would lead to formidable complications. In answer to English complaints Spain equipped a large fleet. Pitt at once made extensive preparations for war. A land force was raised, the fleet was placed in readiness, and plans were drawn up for attacking the Spanish possessions in the West Indies and South America. On the 5th of May a message from the king announcing the prospect of war was presented to both houses of Parliament. Fitzherbert, "a man of parts and of infinite zeal and industry," was in June sent to Madrid to insist on full reparation being made to the parties injured before the abstract question of the right of the Spaniards to the western coast of America was discussed. Holland and Prussia were applied to for assistance, and both declared themselves ready to fulfil the engagements of the Triple Alliance of 1788. Spain, on the other hand, looked to Russia and France. Early in 1789 the idea of a quadruple alliance between France, Spain, Russia, and Austria in answer to the Triple Alliance had been seriously entertained. Though that was perhaps no longer feasible, Russia was still on bad terms with England, and to Russia Spain at once appealed.

But it was to France that Spain most confidently looked for aid against England. Ever since the secret alliance of 1733 the interests of France and Spain had been united against the trading supremacy of England. And by the Family Compact of 1761 the two powers had been still more closely drawn together. They were by their alliance bound to aid each other in all enterprises. Spain had come to the assistance of France at the end of the Seven Years' War; she had joined her in helping the Americans to secure their independence. It seemed then, at first sight, unlikely that the French nation would refuse to aid a well-tried ally in her extremity, especially when the foe was England, the common enemy of both nations. A war between England and Spain, in which France fought on the side of Spain, would in 1790 have changed the whole course of the Revolution and deeply affected the current of European history. And that such a war was on the verge of breaking out a very cursory acquaintance with the history of France is sufficient to show. In fact, it was not till October that it was finally certain that France would not support Spain in a war against England.

But France in 1790 occupied in Europe a far different position to that which she held during the ministry of Vergennes. Under that statesman she had largely contributed to the success of the American colonists in their struggle for independence, she had checked the designs of Joseph II on the Scheldt, she had persuaded Turkey to recognise the occupation of the Crimea by Russia. Her influence, while considerable at Constantinople and at Stockholm, was paramount at The Hague. The balance of power, as Mirabeau said, was in her hands. The death of Vergennes, early in 1787, marks the fall of France from her influential position in Europe. War was indeed within an ace of breaking out between France and England in the autumn of 1787, and to many Frenchmen of that day war seemed the best means of escape from the bankruptcy which threatened France.

But Montmorin was not of the same stuff as Vergennes, and from his refusal in the autumn of 1787 to fight for the supremacy of France at The Hague must be dated the beginning of the complete effacement of France in Europe.

The Triple Alliance of 1788, the immediate result of the retirement of France, gave the law to Europe for some years, and in face of this formidable combination France, occupied with her own internal troubles which culminated in the revolution of 1789, remained a cipher in Europe. For a moment it had seemed as though a quadruple alliance between France, Russia, the emperor, and Spain would early in 1789 be formed. But nothing came of this project, so dear to Catherine II, and France remained apparently unconscious of the perplexing questions which engrossed the attention of the European world. The possibility of the complete separation of the Belgian provinces from the empire had through the greater part of 1789 called for the serious attention of the members of the Triple Alliance, on the ground that they might fall into the hands of France. The Belgians had early in 1790 invited the French government to recognise their independence. To a great extent inspired by the example of France, they had carried out successfully a revolution; a considerable party in the revolted provinces held the same views and adopted the same language as the French republicans, and were anxious to bring about the annexation of their country by France. It seemed likely that the insurgents, if England and Prussia refused to support them, would throw themselves into the arms of France, where they would be welcomed by Lafayette and his party. But France had neither money nor serviceable troops, and the Assembly did wisely in supporting Louis XVI on two separate occasions in his determination not to receive any overtures from the revolted provinces.

The victory of the clerical party and the consequent proscription of the democrats in the spring of 1790 destroyed all chance of the Belgian Revolution receiving any sympathy from the National Assembly. To judge from Viennese opinion, it seemed unlikely that even the Nootka Sound affair would divert France from her own Revolution and induce her to carry out her engagements with her allies. Though nominally bound to Austria by the treaty of 1756, it had long been apparent to the imperial court that nothing could be hoped for from the French alliance.

In Vienna men only spoke of France in a tone of irony. Mercy, the Austrian ambassador, declared in the autumn of 1789 that the influence of France in Europe was destroyed. Leopold, six weeks after his accession, had not thought it worth while to notify the fact officially to the

French government, and in April, when anxious to secure the good offices of some powerful nation in mediating between himself and Prussia, he applied not to his ally, France, but to England. It was evident to Montmorin that the treaty of 1756 was at an end; the powerlessness of France was advertised to the world.

In spite, however, of the temporary effacement of France, politicians of experience firmly expected that she would support Spain in the disputes of that power with England. All through the winter of 1789-'90 the possibility of a foreign war which would have the effect of diverting popular passions, had been discussed in Paris. Lafayette, whose hatred for England amounted almost to a craze, seized upon the news of the likelihood of a rupture between England and Spain, and formed a party whose policy was to support the ministry in a war against England. The commercial treaty of 1786 between England and France was unpopular, and it would have been easy for Montmorin, who was himself not averse to war, to have taken advantage of the ill will borne to England by France and embarked the country on a popular struggle. The Jacobins, however, headed by Barnave, the Lameths, and Duport, who opposed Lafayette on every point, were at one with Robespierre in the opinion that a war would strengthen the crown, endanger the results of the Revolution, and ought therefore to be avoided.

On the 14th of May Montmorin wrote to the president of the Assembly, describing the English preparations against Spain, declared that as a precaution the French government were fitting out fourteen ships, and asked for subsidies to pay for this new expense. It was hoped that England's warlike attitude would unite all parties in the

Assembly in firmly supporting the king against their hated rival. But it was at once evident that the deputies were by no means prepared to act in a united manner. Amid great excitement Alexandre Lameth proposed that the Assembly should at once decide the question whether to the king or nation belonged the right of peace and war. The folly of wasting time in a discussion of an abstract principle when war might break out any day was immediately pointed out by Mirabeau, who, in a telling speech, persuaded the Assembly on May 15th to agree to Montmorin's proposal, and to thank the king for the measures which he had taken to maintain peace. Having provided for the exigencies of the moment, the Assembly then entered upon a debate, which lasted several days, upon the constitutional question.

Mirabeau's views at this time on the true policy of France at this critical moment may be gleaned from a speech—never delivered—which he had himself in part written. In this speech, printed in the appendix to Volume VII of the Memoirs of Mirabeau, we find an eloquent eulogy of the policy of the Family Compact. France is the natural and necessary ally of Spain, and Spain is equally the only ally on whom France can at the moment count. "For Turkey is engaged in a serious struggle with Russia; Poland, anarchic as usual and in danger of partition, can only look to Prussia, if haply that power will aid her against Russian and Austrian designs; Austria is, indeed, nominally allied to France, but the ambition of Leopold will not allow him to forego his plans in the East; Sweden is the friend of England, and that power, with Prussia and Holland, form the Triple Alliance which has left France isolated in Europe. Spain alone can aid her to withstand

England on the seas. Honour and interest alike command the French nation to keep to her engagements with Spain. Friendship with England is impossible, and the late commercial treaty ought at once to be repudiated. England only cares for the extension of her commerce; enmity between her and France must necessarily be eternal." Mirabeau then examines the causes of the disputes, and finds that the English pretensions to Nootka Sound are flimsy. "In interfering with the Spanish claims established as far back as the reign of Charles II the English have broken the Treaty of Utrecht. In reality the English desire to force Spain to make a commercial treaty with them. Moreover, the upper classes in England would gladly see England involved in war with Spain. The revolution of 1789 only separates the English still further from the French nation; for liberty is hostility to monopoly. The king of England and the peers fear for their privileges, and hope by means of a successful war to divert the attention of the advocates of reform. What, then, should be the true policy of France? She can observe neutrality, she can simply carry out the terms of treaties and give Spain the assistance stipulated, or she can throw herself heart and soul into the struggle and repudiate the hated commercial treaty with England. The French nation cannot abandon their old ally to the tender mercies of England without bringing about the ruin of their commerce, their colonies, and endangering their own independence and their constitutions. A firm attitude may avert the struggle. The National Assembly should therefore bring forward a decree begging the king to make a very considerable increase to the fleet, to offer the mediation of France in the quarrel between England and Spain, and, lastly, if England should persist in her hostile attitude, to declare that the first shot fired against Spain will be considered as fired against France."

But the Assembly by no means shared these warlike views, which Mirabeau himself found reason before long to modify. In the famous discussion which was aroused by the Nootka Sound question the Jacobins, following the lead of Barnave and Robespierre, not only claimed that the right of declaring peace and war should lie with the Assembly, but declared in favour of a formal renunciation of all projects of conquest and of all wars other than those purely defensive. Mirabeau's speech on May 20th and his famous answer to Barnave on May 22d are well known. He had no difficulty in showing that the right of declaring peace and war must necessarily belong to the king, as head of the executive; he had still less difficulty in proving to all reasonable men the folly of the Utopian ideas of those who thought all Europe would speedily follow the example of France, and unite with her in decreeing the abolition of war. But the Assembly, carried away by mere phrases, by baseless ideals, and by mere Utopian dreams, was not in a condition to appreciate Mirabeau's statesman-like argument.

An immense mob congregated in the streets, and the Assembly itself was crowded with the populace stirred up by the extreme radicals. Cazalès, who had ventured to declare that, for his part, Russians, Germans, and English were nothing to him, that he only cared for his own countrymen, and that the blood of one of his fellow-citizens was dearer to him than the blood of all the people of the world, was cried down for daring to assert such narrow patriotic sentiments. In the streets a new pamphlet entitled The

Great Treason of the Count Mirabeau" was hawked about. But Mirabeau's eloquent refutation, on the 22d, of Barnave's arguments of the day before was for the moment irresistible, and he succeeded in carrying the essential part of his proposition, namely, that "questions of peace and war were to be settled in the Assembly after an express proposition of the king and under his sanction." He could not, however, prevent the Assembly from formally declaring that the French nation renounces all wars of conquest, and will never employ its forces against the liberty of any people.

Though these decrees were by the king of Prussia interpreted to mean that France would not carry on any aggressive war against England, more sagacious observers were by no means of the same opinion. On June 24th Pitt wrote to his mother that "our foreign business remains still in suspense, and I hardly know what to conjecture of the possibility of peace or war."

The party of peace at any price had by no means won a complete victory. Montmorin's subsidies had been voted, and the Spanish ambassador loudly called for the fulfilment of the terms of the Family Compact, and in a private audience made a direct appeal to Louis XVI. Mirabeau himself appears to have abandoned the extreme position taken up in his unpublished speech, and in his note to the court of June 23d shows the king the right attitude to take up in his conference with the Spanish ambassador. The Family Compact, according to Mirabeau, must be dissolved, for as drawn up it is a mere dynastic treaty, hence impossible to be accepted by the Assembly. In its place he advises an ordinary treaty which shall have regard to the commercial interests of France, and further recommends that an envoy shall be at once despatched to Spain to carry out his suggestion. Moreover, he said, it would be unwise to present to the Assembly any treaty for ratification till July 14th, the anniversary of the capture of the Bastile, was over. The Société de 1789 had, too, published the articles of the Family Compact, and it was obvious that Mirabeau was right in thinking its acceptance by the Assembly impossible.

The month of July passed amid rumours of wars and much uncertainty. Though the French ambassador in London, M. de la Luzerne, might write that, in consequence of the decree of May 22d, the opinion in London was that no French minister dare make warlike preparations, and that England could without fear assert her supremacy over the two worlds, and though Alexandre Lameth might look forward to the immediate tranquility of Europe, no statesman could reasonably expect that the French people had suddenly lost all their national characteristics. It only required a rumour at the end of July that Austrian troops were marching through French territory to Belgium to throw the Assembly into a panic. Reports of hostile preparations by Spain and England, of a threatening league between Prussia and Austria, and of the formation of an Émigré army to restore the old *régime* were sufficient to overthrow in a moment all the peaceful protestations of the Assembly.

The excitable, nervous character of the deputies stood revealed to Europe, and on July 28th the king was petitioned to arm the citizens and to provide for the defence of the state, and the leave already granted to the Austrians to pass through French territory was withdrawn. On July 29th it was decided that a committee of six should be appointed to examine all existing treaties between France and foreign powers, and to report to the Assembly upon all questions of foreign affairs. On August 1st the following members of the committee known as Le Comité Diplomatique were appointed: Mirabeau, Fréteau, Masson, D'André, Barnave, Duchâtelet. The next day Montmorin sent to the Assembly a letter of the Spanish ambassador, Ferrare Nuñez, dated June 16th, in which "the speedy and exact performance" of the Family Compact is demanded, France is invited to give an explicit answer, and to take her measures openly, "so as to avoid the least occasion of distrust." Otherwise Spain would "look for other friends and allies among all the powers of Europe." Instead of at once deciding, as was the general expectation, in favour of carrying out the Family Compact, the Assembly referred the whole matter to the Diplomatic Committee. There Mirabeau was all-powerful, and had been elected reporter (or chairman). On August 25th Mirabeau communicated to the Assembly the opinion of the committee. In his address he stated that it would be well if France could remain at peace until her finances had been placed on a sound footing, her army reorganised, harmony restored generally in the country, and the constitution completed. "Soon," he said, "these results will be secured; soon also Europe, freed, like France, from the chains of despotism, will embark upon a free and generous policy." He then proceeded to explain that the committee recommended the adhesion of France to all existing treaties until they are revised or modified, that thirty ships should be commissioned, and that the engagements to Spain should be carried out, that for the Family Compact should be substituted a national compact. On the 25th the Assembly went beyond this report, and decreed "that they would abide by the defensive and commercial engagements which the government had contracted with Spain," and further, "that the king be desired to order into commission forty-five ships of the line, with a proportionable number of frigates and small vessels."

At this time, though Montmorin was pacific in his tone, our representative in Paris, Lord Gower, declared that, though the king and ministry desired peace, there was no doubt that a very large body of men in France were inclined to war. Opponents of the commercial treaty with England naturally hoped that war would free them from the terms of the treaty; the aristocratic party had everything to gain from war; many, like Lafayette, regarded England with hatred or with jealousy; and it was also suggested that Spanish gold had won over many members of the National Assembly. There is no doubt that war was on the point of breaking out between England and France in the autumn of 1790. Mirabeau has left in a memoir drawn up at this time a remarkable sketch of his views on the situation. In it he depicts in a masterly manner the fall of France after the death of Vergennes; he describes her position at the moment, and discusses the true policy of France in the event of Spain's refusal to make a national alliance. France, in that case, though isolated, should show energy and activity. Her diplomatists should make all Europe see the importance of not allowing France to be overwhelmed by her foes. If, however, Spain accepts the proposals of the National Assembly, war is certain to break out, and the condition of Europe forbids the hope of any ally other than Spain. He then points out that war will only aggravate the evils from which France is suffering, and that unless France succeeds in securing the assistance of Austria and Sweden, unless she is well served by her ambassadors in all the European courts, unless she can count on divisions breaking out among her enemies, war will bring to France disaster abroad and anarchy at home.

It was a serious moment for France, and, indeed, for Europe. Lord Gower most explicitly declared to Montmorin early in September that the support of France to any claims advanced by Spain would lead to war with England. In obedience to the decree of the National Assembly, the king had begun to arm sixteen ships of the line. Through the greater part of September Lord Gower's language was uniformly firm, and on September 17th he writes that he thinks this language has made some impression on the popular mind. The exact means by which war was averted is still a mystery. Mirabeau, as chairman of the Diplomatic Committee, and as confidential adviser of the court, was the most influential person in France. Mirabeau had declared himself in favour of war. If peace was to be preserved, and Pitt was always in favour of peace, some influence must be brought to bear upon Mirabeau. Lord Gower could not hold any public communication with him, for Mirabeau held no official position. Pitt therefore resolved to send Hugh Elliot, just returned from his successful embassy at Copenhagen, on an unofficial mission to Paris. Elliot had been at school with Mirabeau, and had always been on friendly relations with him. In Lord Stanhope's Life of Pitt a letter written by Pitt early in October to Elliot is printed, in which the English minister says: " I imagine, indeed, from your account that we can hardly hope in case war should take place with Spain and should last for any time that France will not ultimately take part in it. But I think there seems to be a reasonable prospect that the person with whom you communicate may be brought to make such representations to the Spanish court, even if a rupture should have taken place, as may lead to a speedy restoration of peace. . . . At least it may be fairly expected that no immediate decision will be taken in France to give actual succours to Spain on the commencement of hostilities, and this point alone will be of great consequence, as it will give us considerable advantages in our first operations."

It is evident from this letter that the Diplomatic Committee was still inclined to maintain the Family Compact. Suddenly, however, Mirabeau changed his mind. From that moment peace was certain, as Spain would not go to war unless she was supported by France.

There is no doubt whatever that to Elliot's influence was due Mirabeau's change of mind. But we know nothing of the arguments used by Elliot, and this obscure passage of diplomatic history has never been cleared up. All we know is that Elliot's mission was entirely successful. Years after a brother diplomatist, writing to Elliot about a negotiation then pending, says: " If you could have been sent to conduct it as successfully as you did your mission to Mirabeau," etc. On October 22d Lord Gower wrote that " the popular party has signified to me, through Mr. Elliot, their earnest desire to use their influence with the court of Madrid in order to bring it to accede to the just demands of his majesty, and if supported by us, I am induced to believe, they will readily prefer an English alliance to a Spanish compact." This complete change of front was still more strikingly exemplified in Mirabeau's note for the court on October 28th, in which he advises peace as absolutely necessary in the interests of the monarchy, and declares that the English preparations were made with regard to the war between Russia and Sweden, that Spain cannot fight without France, that there is no party of any consequence in France which desires war, and that the whole tendency of European politics is in favour of peace.

All danger of war between France and England was now removed, and Florida Blanca, who at the end of July had appeared to be bent on war, found that the prospects of the promised French alliance were very doubtful. This defection of her ally, combined with the appearance of a formidable English fleet, produced a powerful effect in Spain. Somewhat suddenly, on October 28th, a convention was signed between Florida Blanca and Fitzherbert, followed shortly afterward by the Treaty of Escurial, in which Spain surrendered every point. Pitt had won a great triumph. He had destroyed the Family Compact; he had won a considerable victory over Spain; he had preserved peace; France remained isolated.

The peaceful settlement of this difficult question was naturally very disappointing to the aristocratical party. It was, moreover, the opinion of Gouverneur Morris that a foreign war would alone save the French nation from the impending anarchy. But would a foreign war have done more than plunge France rapidly into the chaos towards which she was tending? Her army was disorganized, and time was required for its entire reconstitution. Peace was necessary to complete the work of the Assembly; peace was necessary till France had given herself a working government, for, as Mirabeau said, France was then practically without a government.

It is probably true, as Von Sybel asserts, that the outbreak of hostilities at that period would not have run counter to the interests of the Jacobins, but would have played into their hands by bringing about the fall of a king and ministers whose weakness and indecision would have rendered them incapable of carrying on a successful war. The history of 1790 conclusively proves that the adoption of revolutionary principles had not in any way changed the readiness of the French nation to engage in war if its interests were threatened or an ally attacked. It soon became no less evident that the love of aggression and aggrandizement was by no means dead, and even the deputies perceived before the dissolution of their Assembly, in September, 1791, that a nation situated as France was could not ignore its traditions and interests. In November, 1790, Avignon had been declared united to the French crown, and the French had thus rapidly deviated from the path of self-abnegation marked out in the previous May.

When once it was realized that French interests demanded annexations, and that foreign powers were not likely to accept willingly and immediately the principles of the Revolution, a new period in the foreign policy of France was begun. The Girondists demanded a propagandist campaign in case any power attacked or threatened French independence. "Let us tell Europe," said Isnard, at the close of 1791, "that the French people, if once they draw the sword, will throw aside the scabbard; and if the cabinets of Europe bring about a war between the kings and the peoples, we will unite all peoples in a struggle to the death against the kings." In 1792 the Girondists carried out their views and involved France in a war which lasted, with short intervals, till 1815. At the outset the ministry, guided by Dumouriez, the Girondist minister of foreign affairs, showed no originality in its conception of what should be the true foreign policy of France.

It had required all the efforts of Mirabeau and Lafayette to prevent the outbreak of war over the affair of Nootka Sound, and it was then evident that a strong party existed which was anxious, in spite of the abstract principles asserted by the Constituents, to fulfil the terms of the Family Compact with Spain. In 1792 Dumouriez and the Girondists boldly returned to the foreign policy of Henry IV, Richelieu, and Louis XIV. War was to be waged against Austria, and the principal theatre of the war was to be the Austrian Netherlands, which, when conquered, was to be declared an independent republic. By such a policy Dumouriez hoped to avert any hostile action on the part of Great Britain, which would resent the annexation of the Austrian Netherlands to France. In order to isolate Austria Dumouriez proposed to secure the neutrality of Prussia, the states of the Empire, Sweden, and Denmark, and to gain the alliance of Bavaria.

From 1756 to 1792 the alliance between France and Austria, the result of the diplomatic revolution of 1756, had held good. In 1792 France reverted to her ancient policy of hostility to the Hapsburgs. On this occasion, however, Europe did not second the efforts of France, as it had done in the Austrian Succession War, and Dumouriez found himself unable to repeat the rôle of Belleisle. Though a party existed at Berlin favourable to the revolutionary principles, Prussia refused to desert its coalition with Austria; and Bavaria and the other German states, though hostile to both Austria and Prussia, did not form themselves into a third state under the control of France. Furthermore, as after Valmy the French aggressions increased and the Austrian Netherlands were occupied, the Scheldt declared open, and Holland threatened, England adopted a hostile attitude; and in February, 1793, Dumouriez found that instead of France fighting Austria alone, she was opposed by all the powers of Western Christendom. Though Dumouriez' knowledge of European politics was accurate, and though his opinions were justified by later events, he failed to appreciate the effect upon Europe of that French enthusiasm for their revolutionary principles which showed itself in an active propaganda, in annexations of territory, and in a generally aggressive policy, illustrated by the occupation of the Austrian Netherlands and by the decrees of November 19 and December 15, 1792, which incited the inhabitants of Europe to rise against their rulers. The principles adopted in 1789 had been entirely thrown aside and a war of aggrandizement entered upon.

After the French armies had been defeated at Neerwinden and Dumouriez had fled, Danton endeavoured for the remainder of 1793 to return to the spirit of the declarations of 1789. He demolished the propagandist views of the Girondists and the decrees of November 19th and December 15th by declaring that such principles would compel the French to support a revolution in China, and on April 13, 1793, the Convention declared that the French people would not interfere in the affairs of other nations. The war then resolved itself into a defensive war, and a struggle for existence fully justified by the existence of a European coalition which aimed at the restoration of the Bourbons.

With the establishment of the Committee of Public

Safety and the successful defence of France in the second half of 1793 the foreign policy of the French republicans passed into a new phase, more advanced than, but in many respects resembling, the policy advocated by Dumouriez. War against Austria was to be combined with very elaborate negotiations with all the other European powers, whether in the first or second rank, in order to break up the coalition. So successful were the efforts of the Committee of Public Safety that in 1794 French successes drove back the allies at all points, and led to the breaking up of the coalition in 1793. The treaties of Basle constituted a diplomatic triumph for the French, who, having detached Spain, Prussia, Holland, Tuscany, Norway, and Sweden from the ranks of their foes, were able to concentrate their efforts upon England, Austria, and Sardinia. By the treaties of Basle revolutionary France had again entered into the European system, and had at the same time shown that it was determined to advance the French boundary to its natural frontiers, and so to realize the dreams of Louis XIV. Richelieu had declared that the frontier of ancient Gaul ought to be that of France, and Danton had emphasized this opinion by declaring that the limits of France were marked by nature, and were the ocean, the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Rhine.

Having broken up the concert of Europe, the task before the French was simplified. During the period of the Directory (1795–'99) can be traced ideas dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and attempts to adapt them to the new condition of affairs. Rewbell, like Dumouriez, belonged to that school of diplomatists who regarded Austria with undying enmity, and looked upon Prussia as the natural ally of France. Others of his colleagues, supported by such astute politicians as Talleyrand and Sieyès, opposed the idea of giving Prussia a strong position in north Germany. They were equally ready to negotiate with Austria or with Prussia, so long as they were able to remove both powers from the French frontier by means of the interposition of a number of small states dependent on France. This plan of setting up a quantity of little republics had been entertained by Belleisle in the Austrian Succession War, and those of the directors who advocated this policy proposed to push Prussia behind the Elbe, or, at any rate, behind the Weser, and to compensate her for losses on the west by acquisitions farther east.

Though Rewbell carried out his views and the campaign against Austria was not extended to hostilities against Prussia, Napoleon on becoming emperor at once realized that the policy urged by Sieyès and Talleyrand was the true policy of France. In some ways his German policy was a return to the ancient policy of the French nation; in others it embodied new and striking developments which for a time placed central Europe under the heel of a foreign despotism. Though unable to check the growth of the feeling of nationality in Prussia, or to prevent that kingdom from becoming the leading German state, Napoleon did succeed in prolonging the existence of such states as Bavaria and Saxony. But not content with a purely Continental policy, he endeavoured to avenge on England the losses and defeats which France had suffered at her hands since 1688.

In 1815 the foreign policy of the revolutionary and Napoleonic period had ended in disastrous failure. The Prussians, Russians, and Austrians had invaded France and taken Paris; the English had destroyed the Continental system and swept the seas, and as early as 1810 had taken all the French colonies.

It was only the quarrels of the allies and the diplomacy of Talleyrand that secured for France the respect due to a great though defeated nation.

III. After 1815

The year 1815 brought to an end the second Hundred Years' War, and England and France have as yet never been again in armed conflict. They had struggled for supremacy in Canada, in India, and on the sea, and England had won. The old hostility of France to Austria had, too, lost its meaning and disappeared from among the active forces which moved the passions of Europe. It was impossible for French invasions of Germany to be in the future either profitable or successful. The rise of Prussia was a fact the exact import of which was not fully understood, and with its unostentatious but continuous development Prussia was in no sense a menace to its neighbour.

The foreign policy, therefore, of France was forced to flow along new channels and to find opportunities for its exercise now in supporting the Spanish throne against the liberal tendencies of a large number of Spaniards, now in joining England to secure for the Greeks a measure of independence.

Louis Philippe, after aiding the Belgians to shake off the Dutch yoke, busied himself with successes in Algiers and adventures in Egypt. His ministers, however, were by no means successful foreign politicians, and neither Thiers nor Guizot raised the reputation of the French Foreign Office. In fact the disgrace to Louis Philippe's policy brought about by the Spanish marriages was one of the causes of his overthrow. Though France was to a great extent isolated during the Restoration period, from 1830 to 1848 the successive French governments had cultivated friendship with England; in Napoleon's III's reign French and English soldiers fought together in the Crimea.

With the intervention of France in the Italian War of Independence French foreign policy entered upon a most disastrous period. Without clearness or consistency the emperor plunged from one blunder into another, and the reputation of France suffered enormously in Europe. The Mexican expedition, the Luxembourg affair, and the Prussian War ended in failure and disaster, and with the establishment of the third republic France again found herself isolated in Europe. Since 1815 forces then latent had developed surprising strength, and not only had Italy become a powerful kingdom, but Prussia had wrested the supremacy in Germany from Austria, and in 1871 the king of Prussia was crowned emperor of Germany.

After some years of uncomfortable isolation (following the Franco-Prussian War), during which Prussia, Austria, and Italy formed the famous Triple Alliance, France has drawn close to Russia, and the intimate connection between a republic and a despotism is still puzzling Europe. First advocated during the regency of Orléans, between 1715 and 1723, and then realized for three uneasy years by Napoleon I, it has been the privilege not of a king or emperor of France, but of a republican government, to carry into effect Peter the Great's scheme of a close alliance between France and Russia.

No country has prepared more surprises for Europe than France, no country has dreaded isolation more than

France, and no country has so rapidly recovered from defeats. The French have always been ready to suspend their internal development for the sake of military glory, and consequently the domestic history of France has been deeply affected by her foreign policy. It remains to be seen whether the Latin races are able to hold their own against the increasing vigour and enterprise which is the characteristic feature of the purely Teutonic peoples.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE FRANCE OF TO-DAY

Modern France is the product of the Revolution and of the French Empire, and modern France is nothing if not conservative. " La République sera conservatrice ou elle ne sera pas," were the words of Thiers, and they are fully borne out by the history of the third republic. The prosperity of France and the maintenance of internal order are to-day as much prized by the peasant and the ordinary tradesman as they were in the evil days of the Directory or in the early months of 1848. Patriotic, moderate, and upright, the mass of the French people during the last hundred and ten years have lived through a period very " remarkable for its changes, its grandeur, its misery, for sanguine hope and terrible disillusions."

From the dictatorship of Thiers to the present day—a period of nearly thirty years—France has existed under a republic. Between 1792 and 1870 the form of government has been, with the fall of the existing *régime*, changed nine times. In 1792 the monarchy fell, in 1794 Robespierre and the Committee of Public Safety were swept away, in 1799 the Directory perished amid universal rejoicing. With the advent of the nineteenth century further rapid changes supervened. In 1814 the first empire came to an end, and in 1815 Louis XVIII had to fly, to return after the battle of Waterloo. In 1830 the Bourbon monarchy was finally overthrown, to the great detriment of French political life, which was just beginning to develop naturally, and which, under the guidance of wise statesmen, might have risen to something approaching that seen in England. The French people took little part in that revolution; they disliked the compromise which the liberal opposition offered them, and when Louis Philippe fell in 1848, the magnitude of the mistake made in 1830 was realized by the shortsighted doctrinaire liberals.

The dismissal of Polignac in 1830 would probably have saved the situation, and the party of Thiers and Guizot might have forced Charles X to act as a constitutional ruler. As it was, France since 1830 has shown no political stability, the Legitimist monarchy is dead, and at times it seems as if some military adventurer might, in the event of a national crisis, destroy the republic and set up a third empire. In 1848 the second republic was established, but gave way in 1852 to the second empire, which in its turn was succeeded by the third republic, in 1870.

One result of these rapid changes is that France at times resembles a water-logged ship. She has no permanent dynasty, no permanent aristocracy, no traditions except those connected with Napoleon I and his empire, no permanent institutions beyond those set up by the great emperor. She has cut herself off from her brilliant history connected with the Capetian, Valois, and Bourbon dynasties, and since the fall of Napoleon I has not been able to justify in the eyes of Europe the wisdom of her action in breaking off completely with the glorious traditions of her past.

At the present time there is a large party in France who regard a republic as the only possible government for a country which cut itself adrift from the traditions of its ancient monarchy in 1792. The assertion that "the republic since September 22, 1792, had not ceased for a single moment to live its latent life as a government in reserve for the salvation of the country" represents the views of the extreme republicans. This view harmonizes with that held by De Tocqueville, who considers the first period of the revolution ended with the triumph of the middle class in 1830, and agrees with the position always adopted by journalists representing the opinions of members of the extreme left.

On the other hand, there always is in France a strong undercurrent of opinion hostile to the republic, and in sympathy with a monarchical *régime*. The existence of such an opinion has been illustrated of late years by the revival of the Napoleonic legend and by the cessation of the feeling of hostility to and distrust of the second empire which the events of 1870 and 1871 engendered. From 1870 to 1890 the Napoleonic legend attracted little notice and less enthusiasm. The events connected with the fall of the second empire were vividly remembered, and the subsequent death of the prince imperial discouraged the Bonapartist supporters. From 1890, however, the tide in favour of Cæsarism has turned and the memory of the first Napoleon has become a real force in French politics.

In spite of the attacks of Lanfrey on Napoleon I, the conclusions arrived at by Taine, though hostile to the great emperor, have undoubtedly damaged the memory of the Revolution, while the flood of literature bearing on the career of Napoleon testifies to the enormous interest taken in the history of his life and reign. The Panama scandal and several other such incidents have, on the one hand, brought home to Frenchmen the truth that a republic is by no means free from corruption and venality, while on the other there remains the ever-important fact that modern France is the work of Napoleon I. Mr. Bodley's words on this point are very striking:

"Under the restoration of the legitimate kings, under the revolutionary monarchy of the Orleans branch, under the plebiscitary empire, and under the parliamentary republic the Napoleonic construction forms the unchanging basis of the administration and life of the country, whatever forms of legislation and executive powers the constitution of the moment has set up. . . . Moreover, nothing survives of the Revolution but what was established by Napoleon." *

Though at intervals the French nation can be roused to declare in unmistakable fashion its preference for one or other of the many forms of government presented to it, it remains true that one of the strangest features of French society is the general indifference of the mass of the people to politics even at critical periods in the history of France. The bulk of the population of France is not and never has been revolutionary; the main objects of the people are tranquility, order, and peace. As a rule the majority has allowed itself to be dominated by a small active minority, which by its energy, and not infrequently ferocity, has terrorized the ordinary Frenchman into obedience to its wishes.

In the autumn of 1791 when the extremist Pétion was elected mayor of Paris comparatively few of the elect-

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* Modern France, by J. E. C. Bodley, vol. i, p. 120

ors took the trouble to go to the polls, though only a small number of the Parisians desired the election of a violent revolutionist. The fall of Robespierre was certainly brought about by the consensus and with the aid of a majority of the Parisians, who for the time threw off their habitual carelessness and adopted a less submissive attitude. The grapeshot of Vendémiaire, however, was a sufficient excuse for inaction during the unpopular government of the Directory, and it was only the ambition of Sieyès and the determination of Bonaparte that freed France from a yoke detested by all classes. Similarly the exciting Hundred Days were not brought about by the general wish of the nation, and the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 in no sense represented a widespread desire for change. It is probably nearer the mark to say that all the above upheavals were organized and carried out against the will of the French nation.

In 1848 after the establishment of universal suffrage a clear issue was placed before the people in France, and the answer was unmistakable. The nation was sound at bottom and refused to have any dealings with the socialists. It had not taken any share in the overthrow of Louis Philippe, but with regard to the future it spoke in no hesitating tone. Peace and order were required; political rights were of secondary importance. To this decision of an independent public opinion Louis Bonaparte owed his imperial throne.

The occasions, indeed, when the French nation has risen in its might are very rare. For some eighty years France has been the victim of attacks and plots on the part either of the reactionaries or the Jacobins. History shows that as a rule the violent party in France carries the day and wields all the power. Its influence is due to the absence in ordinary times of public opinion or of public spirit, and to the ease with which the French population is intimidated by violent partisans. To this peculiar characteristic of the French people the Jacobins owed much of their success in 1792 and the following years. While the deputies on mission intimidated the provinces, a determined knot of revolutionists carried on the Reign of Terror in Paris and guillotined thousands of persons belonging mainly to the middle and lower classes without experiencing any resistance on the part of their victims. The cowardice of the *bourgeoisie* in Paris during the year of the Terror is one of the least edifying, though perhaps one of the most extraordinary features in the history of the Jacobin supremacy.

France since 1789, and especially since 1871, has frequently been ruled by ministries in which she has no interest or confidence. Public opinion in France is usually manufactured, and rarely expresses the real views of the people. Party and personal influences dictate the tone of the articles in the journals, which consequently have little value and are seldom read by the majority of Frenchmen.

The nation is apparently satisfied with a government which guarantees the continuance of order; otherwise it is indifferent to the rise and fall of the various ministries which, with bewildering rapidity, have appeared and have suddenly been overthrown. This indifferentism which so largely pervades the electorate shows itself in various ways. The composition of the Chambers is marked by an "abstention des capacités," and consequently the Legislature and Executive are not composed of the men who represent the best qualities of Frenchmen. The more refined a man's nature is the less he cares to subject himself to the attacks of a scurrilous press. Owing, too, to the popular indifferentism, the crassest political ignorance prevails in the provinces. Few take any interest in politics or even read the newspapers, and so a situation is created full of danger to the stability of the state. " There is no public opinion in France," writes Mr. Bodley, " as we understand it in England, or, at all events, no means of expressing it. The spirit of the press of the whole country, excepting in matters of local interest, is regulated by the journalists of Paris, who interpret merely the sentiments, sometimes conflicting, sometimes unanimous, of the boulevards, and the newspaper is not used by the public for airing its grievances by means of letters to the editors." *

It is at any rate as certain as any prophecy with regard to France can be, that there is no sentiment of loyalty to any royal race existing among the French people. The traditions of greatness in times past under the Bourbons are dead. The overthrow of Charles X and Louis Philippe completely destroyed the idea of monarchy " as the symbol of national power," while the collapse of the second empire dealt a blow at the tradition of the first empire and the memory of the administrative genius of the great Napoleon.

Democracy is an accepted fact and universal suffrage has become a necessity in France. Though the conception of equality by a Frenchman falls very short of the doctrine as professed in the early days of the great Revolu-

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* France, by J. E. C. Bodley, vol. i, p. 131.

tion, it remains true that any limitation of the suffrage would shock the national sentiment of equality. Fraternity has long ceased to have any meaning. The French Revolution was essentially cosmopolitan, and the "brotherhood of nations" was loudly proclaimed in 1789. But Europe in the War of Liberation would have none of this doctrine, while the French in erecting statues to Danton and Marat have not shown any desire to destroy the memory of internecine struggles between Frenchmen and Frenchmen. And though personal liberty is by no means sacred and freedom of opinion only exists at the pleasure of the state authorities, the French profess to believe that the famous legend of the Revolution—Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity—has still some of its ancient force. Nothing has perhaps done more to emphasize and intensify the theoretical and practical aspects of liberty in France than the incessant struggle between religion and secularism. In this strife Jacobinism has been allowed to dictate the policy of successive governments, though in other respects the country never hesitates to repudiate the teachings and claims of the Jacobins. The narrow bigotry shown on all possible occasions by the state officials, the deference paid by even the president of the republic to anticlericalism, is all the more astounding when it is remembered that France is a Catholic country, and the vast majority of the people staunch adherents of the Roman Catholic Church. In 1793 and 1794 the whole country, dreading foreign invasion, submitted in all things to a well-organized system of terror wielded by a comparatively small number of determined men; at the present day, though the fear of the outbreak of Jacobinism is as strong as ever, France in the matter of religious policy allows herself to be terrorized by a violent and loud-voiced antireligious minority, whose fundamental doctrine is absolute intolerance of all opinions opposed to its own. The history of the modern development of the opinions and methods which were adopted by Robespierre and his party is in some ways interesting, though its study shakes one's belief in the advantage to be gained from a republican form of government.

In 1873 the monopoly of the University of France was broken down and the right of free teaching allowed to all classes; in 1874 M. Challemel-Lacour led the attacks on Christianity and declared it was necessary to secularize the country. In 1879 and 1880, owing to the influence of Gambetta and Jules Ferry, a secularist policy was carried out and attempts were even made to prohibit all the emblems of religion.

Saint-Just himself could not have desired a more faithful execution of his projects for educating the nation to adopt his creed, and Jules Ferry proved a worthy follower of the tyrannical and intolerant Jacobins. Since 1892 the papacy has changed its attitude—the bishops and clergy are advised to accept the republic. This wise policy has not led to any increase of tolerance toward the Jews. Want of toleration remains a constant menace to internal peace and order, and atheism among the ranks of the socialists is still rampant. It may be that the day is not far distant when the nation will rise in defence of its religious sentiments and convictions, and insist on the establishment of a system of toleration.

At present there are no positive signs that religious liberty is likely to be secured in France, and the situation has not materially altered for the better since 1883, when

Jules Simon wrote on the state of France. "The Catholic religion," he says, "is threatened with a reconstruction of the organization and discipline of the Church by the Parliament; the candidates for Holy Orders are threatened with compulsory military service, absolutely incompatible with their clerical education; it is proposed to suppress the revenue granted by the State to the Church, ... to take from the Church the buildings devoted to public worship, etc., etc. And we are told that religion is not threatened, that these dangers are the invention of clericals, and that the government will not consent to fresh aggressions." *

The same writer also points out that, with reference to religious liberty, "it is curious and painful to witness in 1880 the same exaggerations and the same excesses as in 1793."

At the present day, though the papacy has recognised the republic and forced the monarchists either to withdraw from political life or to become republicans, the extremists still persevere in their antireligious policy, and it will evidently take many years before a real *modus vivendi* can be arranged between the secularists and the Catholics.

It is to be hoped that the course of the national life of France will not be seriously disturbed by the lack of responsibility shown by its journalists, by religious intolerance, or by political rancour. The progress of literature, natural science, and art in France has been of European importance, and no body of men in France have done more to promote the advancement of history and natural science, and for the improvement of instruction than the professors of the École des Chartes. By their efforts learning in France has progressed, and through their valuable researches modern France has gained enormously in the respect of Europe.

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* Dieu, Patrie, Liberté, par Jules Simon, p. 293.

It is peculiarly difficult to forecast the future of the political development of France. Some writers hold that representative institutions are unsuited to the French people, and that a parliamentary system cannot long continue to flourish side by side with the centralized system of administration created by Napoleon I. Others, who regard French history as a slow, though continuous development of the principles of the revolution of 1789, are of opinion that gradually the representative system will become as popular as autocracy was in the past, and that the abuses connected with the French Assembly will disappear.

There is no doubt that statesmanship is needed in France, and it is the absence of it which has caused so many of the political changes of the last twenty-eight years. The relations of the Legislature and Executive are often far from being what an ideal constitution would demand, and the scurrility of the press passes all bounds of decency and decorum. But it is hoped by the friends of the republic that before long the people of France will insist on possessing high-class journals, edited by men with a sense of responsibility, and there is little doubt that if there were a steady demand for creditable political literature the supply would be forthcoming. The pity of it is that at present the newspapers are not read by a large proportion of the people, who devote all their attention to the "trivial round, the common task," and pay no heed to matters of national import.

The republican parliamentary system, it is pointed out, has done much valuable work since 1871. The reorganization of the army and navy, the reconstruction of the national defences, the expansion of French colonial interests, and the re-establishment of friendly relations with the papacy, together with the Russian alliance, must all be placed to the credit of the republican government.

In spite of the comparative success of the republican *régime* there are many thoughtful persons who foresee the overthrow of the parliamentary representative system and the substitution of a dictator whose power will be based on manhood suffrage. It is said, first, that the French nation prefer to be governed, and do not like to govern themselves; and in the next place, that the republic is unable to preserve order, and that it has signally failed to represent the best qualities of Frenchmen. Consequently the nation has no regard for the parliamentary system, which, owing to the prevalence of corruption and the number of small groups which exist in the Chamber, is often signally ineffective. The past history of France would seem to prove the first of these contentions, viz., that the French like to be governed, and are always ready to throw themselves into the hands of a hero who is willing to lead them, to keep order, and to give them peace so far as it is compatible with the national love of glory. It was thus that the nation at various times willingly accepted the despotism of Louis XI, Henry IV, and Louis XIV, and found an acceptable refuge from the anarchy of the government of the Directory, and from the menacing attitude of the 1848 socialists in the establishment of the first and second empires respectively.

Owing, however, to the complete and irreparable break with tradition after the revolution of 1789, it is not necessary or advisable to seek for examples of the French love of an autocracy beyond the foundation of the first empire. Representative Constitutions have hitherto not proved brilliantly successful among Latin or Celtic nations, and there seems little room for doubt that a ruler who could fire the enthusiasm of the people might under certain circumstances succeed in placing himself at the head of the state. The question how far circumstances favourable to the success of a new Napoleon exist at the present day in France, is difficult to answer. Mr. Bodley, in his remarkable work, so often alluded to in these pages, has no hesitation in declaring that France is suffering from political maladies which can be cured by a dictator only. The corruption of Parliament, the violence of the press, the refusal of the most capable Frenchmen to take part in public life, force upon him the conviction that "an emperor as the chief of a republic, far from being an anomaly, might under favourable circumstances solve the unravelled problem of the century."

Such a conclusion of the many honest attempts to give France a sound constitutional government would be a bitter disappointment to all who believe in the ultimate triumph of representative institutions. And the peculiar difficulties with which France has had to contend would justify, even under the present unsatisfactory conditions of public life in France, a prolongation of "the experiment of governing France by ministers supported by a popular Assembly and elected by manhood suffrage." * In other countries, such as England, the aristocracy has taken the

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* Edinburgh Review, April, 1898, p. 543.

lead in local government and in securing reforms. In France it has been otherwise. The French nobles were deprived of all share of local government. When the Revolution came they fled, and no men could be found capable of taking the place of the central authority. The abdication by a large and perhaps the most intelligent class in France of all its duties is an event unprecedented in European history, and the importance of which cannot be overestimated. Since 1789 France, deprived of the services of a large proportion of her most capable sons, has been in the position of a bird deprived of the use of one wing. She was compelled to accept Napoleon's centralized system of administration, which in its turn has hampered the development of local autonomy—a plant of very slow growth.

Thus France has never had a fair chance of gradually replacing the officialism and centralization of her administrative system by local institutions. It is by developing a local spirit such as exists in England that France will find the best means for improving the radical defects of her government and for remedying the evils of her free press. Unfortunately, it is only too possible that events may force on France a solution of "the unravelled problem" which will tend to throw still farther back the evolution of a local popular spirit.

The socialists are now stronger in France than at any previous period in her history. In 1848 and in 1871 they failed in the face of the openly declared opposition of the mass of the French nation. Since 1871 the quarrels between political parties, the attitude taken by the Church, financial scandals, mistakes in foreign policy, and, above all, the weakness of the executive have enabled the socialists to develop to an amazing extent. Even if opposed by the army, they remain a standing menace to the internal peace of France. Allowing that the country is sufficiently united or determined to resist the endeavour to hoist the red flag, two antagonistic systems, in the words of M. Seignobos, still face each other, "un régime public démocratique, un régime administrative hiérarchique." Each has plenty of advocates, each has an equal chance of success. But before the supremacy of either system can be assured the French republic must pass through an anxious if not a dangerous period.

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